NELSON

GWEN
WHITE.

XMAS 1945.

To Peter with love & best wishes

From:- Mummy & Daddy.

Reading for Action—Book IV

TALK OF MANY THINGS

A Book of True Fact and True Fancy
in Prose and Verse
Compiled by Richard Wilson

Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd.
London, Edinburgh, New York, Toronto, and Paris

First published January 1935
Reprinted 1935, 1936 1937, 1938, 1940, 1942 (twice), 1943, 1944, 1945

CONTENTS

Poetry is shown by a Star

	PAGE
The Magic Scythe (*Arnason*) . . .	5
*Snow (*W. de la Mare*) .	12
*Light the Lamps up, Lamplighter (*E. Farjeon*)	13
*The Storm (*E. Shanks*) .	14
Nature Wonders—Threads of Silk (*M. Edwin*) .	15
*The Arrow and the Song (*H. W. Longfellow*) .	20
Will you walk into my Toupig? (*M. Bayne*) .	21
*The Walrus and the Carpenter (*L. Carroll*) .	26
The Princess and the Swineherd (*E. Blyton*)	31
*The Dwarf (*W. de la Mare*)	47
Nature Wonders—Winter-Sleep (*M. Edwin*) .	50
*The Plough (*R. H. Horne*)	55
Naomi, the Fruit-Seller (*M. Bayne*) . . .	56
*The Fairy Tailor (*R. Fyleman*) . . .	61
The Princess and the Pea (*Hans Andersen*) .	63
*As Lucy Went A-Walking (*W. de la Mare*) .	67
Nature Wonders — Dust and Clouds (*M. Edwin*)	72
*A Robin (*R. Bridges*) .	76
A Lake Village (*H. R. Hall*)	78
*The Emperor's Tent (*H. W. Longfellow*) .	82
The Flying Dutchman (*H. E. Scudder*) . .	85
*John Winter (*L. Binyon*) .	90
Orpheus and Eurydice (*Sir G. W. Cox*) . . .	95
Cherry Blossom Land (*M. Bayne*)	103
*Japanese Lullaby (*E. Field*)	110
The Story of Benjamin (*Book of Genesis*) .	112
*Bright Morning (*W. Wordsworth*) . .	127
*Christmas (*E. Hilton Young*) . . .	128

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Nature Wonders—Plant Galls (*M. Edwin*)	129
A Baby's Adventure (*J. McEwen*)	134
*A Midsummer Song (*R. W. Gilder*)	137
Odysseus and Polyphemus (*Sir G. W. Cox*)	139
*Bucephalus (*H. Chesterman*)	154
Nature Wonders—Birds' Nests (*M. Edwin*)	155
*Raptures (*W. H. Davies*)	160
Two Arbour Day Letters.	161
*The Wooden Horse (*H. Chesterman*)	166
Prince Rabbit (*A. A. Milne*)	167
*Peasants' Hunting Song (*S. T. Coleridge*)	187
Two Schoolboys of Malaya (*M. Bayne*)	188
*Latitude and Longitude (*H. Chesterman*)	196
The Tinder-Box (*Hans Andersen*)	197
*Writing (*H. Chesterman*)	211
When Things Come Alive (*Hans Andersen*)	213
*The Coming of the Fairy Queen (*W. Graham Robertson*)	219
The Good Samaritan (*St. Luke*)	221
*Abou Ben Adhem (*Leigh Hunt*)	223

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For permission to use copyright material thanks are due and are hereby tendered to :

Mr. Laurence Binyon for " John Winter " ; Mr. Hugh Chesterman for " Bucephalus," " The Wooden Horse," " Latitude and Longitude," and " Writing," from *The Muse Amuses* ; Mr. Walter de la Mare for " Snow," " The Dwarf," and " As Lucy Went A-Walking " ; Miss Eleanor Farjeon for " Light the Lamps up, Lamplighter " ; Miss Rose Fyleman and the Proprietors of *Punch* for " The Fairy Tailor " ; Mr. A. A. Milne for " Prince Rabbit " ; Mr. Graham Robertson for " The Coming of the Fairy Queen," from *Pinkie and the Fairies* ; Messrs. Jonathan Cape, Ltd., for " Raptures," by W. H. Davies ; The Clarendon Press, Oxford, for " A Robin," from *The Shorter Poems of Robert Bridges*, 1931 ; Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin Co., for " The Flying Dutchman," by Horace E. Scudder ; Messrs. Macmillan and Co., Ltd., for " The Walrus and the Carpenter," from *Through the Looking Glass*, by Lewis Carroll ; Messrs. T. Nelson and Sons, Ltd., and Messrs. W. J. Gage and Co., Toronto, for " A Baby's Adventure " and " Two Arbour Day Letters," by Jessie McEwen ; Messrs. Martin Secker, Ltd., and Mr. Edward Shanks for " The Storm " ; Messrs. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd., for " Christmas," from *A Muse at Sea*, by Sir E. Hilton Young ; Messrs. Lyons and Carnahan for " The Magic Scythe," by Jon Arnason ; and Charles Scribner's Sons for " Japanese Lullaby," by Eugene Field.

The chapters on " Nature Wonders " by Mrs. Maribel Edwin, and the stories by Miss Marie Bayne and Mr. H. R. Hall have been specially written for this book.

THE MAGIC SCYTHE

A Folk Tale from Iceland

A CERTAIN workman once set out from his home in the south to earn wages by cutting hay in the north country. In the mountains a sudden mist and a sleet storm made him lose his way. Afraid to go on farther, he pitched his tent and began to eat.

While he was eating, a brown dog came into his tent. It was dirty, wet, and so fierce-eyed that the poor man felt quite afraid of it. He gave it as much bread and meat as it could eat. Then the big dog ran off into the mist.

At first the man wondered much to see a dog in such a wild place. But after a while he thought no more about it. Having finished his supper, he fell asleep with his saddle for a pillow.

At midnight he dreamed that he saw a tall old woman enter his tent. She spoke thus to him :

" I owe you much, good man, for your kindness to my daughter. I am not able to pay you all you ought to have. Here is a scythe which I place beneath your pillow. It is the only gift I can make

you. Think well of it. It will surely prove useful to you, as it can cut down all that lies before it. But be sure not to put it into the fire to temper it. Sharpen it as you will, but in that way never." So saying, she was seen no more.

When the man awoke and looked out, he found the mist gone and the sun high in the heavens. Getting all his things together, he laid them upon his pack horses. He saddled his own horse last. On lifting the saddle from the ground, he found beneath it a small scythe blade, well worn and rusty. On seeing this, he at once called to mind his dream. So, taking the scythe with him, he set out once more on his way. He soon found the road which he had lost, and made all speed to reach the haying country.

When he reached the north country, he went from house to house, but could find nothing to do. Every farmer had workmen enough, and one week of haying was already past. But he heard that one old woman, thought to be skilled in magic and very rich, always began her haying a week later. Although she seldom hired a workman, yet she managed to have her haying finished when the others did. When by any chance she did hire any one, she was never known to pay him.

Some one said to this workman from the south, "Better go and ask her to hire you. We have no work for you."

PHYLLIS DENTON

So he went to her house and offered to work for her. She agreed to take him. She told him that he might work, if he chose, but that he must expect no pay, "Unless," she said, "you can cut more grass in the whole week than I can rake in on the last day."

He gladly agreed to these terms, and began to mow. And a very good scythe he found that one to be which the woman had given him in his dream! For it cut well and never needed sharpening, though he worked with it five days. He was well pleased, too, with his place, for the old woman was kind enough to him.

One day, entering the forge next to her house, he saw a large number of scythe handles and rakes, and a big heap of blades. He wondered much what the old lady could want with all these. It was the fifth day—Friday. When he was asleep that night, the same elf-woman he had seen on the mountains came again to him.

She said, "Large as are the meadows you have mown, the old woman will easily be able to rake in all that hay to-morrow. And if she does so, she will, as you know, drive you away without paying you. When you see yourself beaten, go into the forge, take as many scythe handles as you think proper, fit their blades to them, then carry them out into that part of the land where the hay is yet uncut.

There you must lay them on the ground, and you shall see how things go."

This said, she went away. In the morning the workman set to work as usual at his mowing.

At six o'clock the old woman came out, bringing five rakes with her. She said to the man, "A goodly piece of ground you have mowed, indeed!"

And so saying, she spread the rakes upon the hay. Then the man wondered to see that though the rake she held raked in much hay, the other four did as much also. And no hand held them!

At noon, seeing that she would get the best of him, he went into the forge. He took several scythe handles and fitted blades to them. He brought them out to the field and laid them upon the grass yet standing. Then all the scythes set to work. They cut down the grass so fast that the rakes could not keep up with them. And so they went on all the rest of the day, and the old woman could not rake in all the hay that lay in the fields.

After dark, she told him to gather up the scythes and take them into the house again, while she picked up the rakes.

"You are wiser than I took you to be," said she, "and you know more than myself. So much the better for you, for you may stay with me as long as you like."

He spent the whole summer there, and they

agreed very well. They gathered a large amount of hay. In the fall she sent him away, with plenty of money, to his own home in the south.

The next summer, and more than one summer following, he spent with her, always being well paid.

After some years he took a farm of his own in the south. He was always looked upon by his neighbours as an honest man, a good fisherman, and an able workman. He always cut his own hay, never using any scythe but the one the elf-woman gave him. Nor did any of his neighbours ever finish their mowing before him.

One summer, while he was fishing, one of his

neighbours came to his house and asked his wife to lend him her husband's scythe, as he had lost his own. She looked for one, but could find only the one of which her husband thought so much.

This, though she was unwilling, she lent to the man, begging him never to temper it in the fire. For that, she said, her good man never did.

The neighbour promised. Taking it with him, he bound it to a handle and began to work with it.

But sweep as he would, and strain as he would, not a single blade of grass fell. Angry at this, he tried to sharpen it, but that did no good. Then he took it into his forge, thinking he would temper it.

"What harm can that do?" he thought.

But as soon as the flames touched it the steel melted like wax, and nothing was left of it but a heap of ashes. Seeing this, the man went in haste to the farmer's wife. He told the woman what had happened. She was at her wits' end with fright and shame when she heard it. For she knew well enough how much her husband thought of this scythe, and how angry he would be at its loss.

And angry indeed he was when he came home. He scolded his wife well for her folly in lending what was not hers. But his anger was soon over, though his sorrow at losing the scythe long remained.

Retold from JON ARNASON.

SNOW

No breath of wind,
No gleam of sun—
Still the white snow
Whirls softly down—
Twig and bough
And blade and thorn
All in an icy
Quiet, forlorn.
Whispering, rustling,
Through the air,
On sill and stone,
Roof—everywhere,
It heaps its powdery
Crystal flakes,
Of every tree
A mountain makes ;
Till pale and faint
At shut of day,
Stoops from the West
One wintry ray.
And, feathered in fire,
Where ghosts the moon,
A robin shrills
His lonely tune.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

LIGHT THE LAMPS UP, LAMPLIGHTER

For a Lamplighter, a Grandmother, the Angel Gabriel, and Any Number of Others

LIGHT the lamps up, Lamplighter,
The people are in the street—
  Without a light
  They have no sight,
And where will they plant their feet?
Some will tread in the gutter,
And some in the mud—oh dear!
Light the lamps up, Lamplighter,
Because the night is here.

Light the candles, Grandmother,
The children are going to bed—
  Without a wick
  They'll stumble and stick,
And where will they lay their head?
Some will lie on the staircase,
And some in the hearth—oh dear!
Light the candles, Grandmother,
Because the night is here.

Light the stars up, Gabriel,
The cherubs are out to fly—

If heaven is blind
How will they find
Their way across the sky?
Some will splash in the Milky Way,
Or bump on the moon—oh dear!
Light the stars up, Gabriel,
Because the night is here.

ELEANOR FARJEON.

THE STORM

WE wake to hear the storm come down,
Sudden on roof and pane;
The thunder's loud and the hasty wind
Hurries the beating rain.

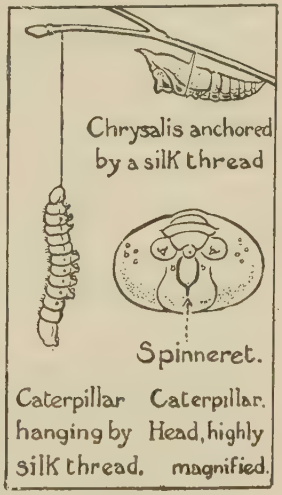
The rain slackens, the wind blows gently,
The gust grows gentle and stills,
And the thunder, like a breaking stick,
Stumbles about the hills.

The drops still hang on leaf and thorn,
The downs stand up more green;
The sun comes out again in power,
And the sky is washed and clean.

EDWARD SHANKS.

Threads of Silk

No animal can fly without wings, and caterpillars are not even good jumpers ; yet some of them are more at home in the air than the cleverest acrobat in a circus. When a caterpillar drops from a tree, and swings for a while on its silken thread, it is not playing at flying—as boys and girls like to do if there is a dangling rope or a maypole-swing in their playground. It is taking to the air to save its life.



If a caterpillar loses its grip on the leaf where it is feeding, or if it has to throw itself off to escape from a hungry bird, it tries to save a fall by dabbing the twig with the liquid silk that flows from a silk-bag opening near its mouth. In the air this silk hardens at once into a firm thread, and the caterpillar can pay out more and more of its life-line and lower itself right to the ground, or it can stop half-way and climb up again, gathering the silk into a tangled ball between its jaws and its front pair of legs.

Many of the threads made by caterpillars are very long, but the largest quantity of silk is spun when the time comes for the full-grown caterpillar to begin its slow change into a winged insect. The caterpillars which become butterflies simply fix themselves by short threads or loops to plants or walls ; but most moth-caterpillars weave wonderful cocoons. Though some of those sleeping-sacks are made of a mixture of silk and moss, or bits of leaves, the finer ones—such as the cocoons of the silk-moth caterpillars or silk-worms—are of pure silk, so neatly wound that people can unwind it again.

Several different kinds of insect-grubs use the silk from their own bodies to make shelters for themselves. Beetle-grubs, for instance, often hide for the winter in underground holes lined with silk ; and there is a kind of ant, common in hot countries, which has the strange habit of picking up its own young ones and using the silk that comes from their silk-bags to gum leaves together to make a tent.

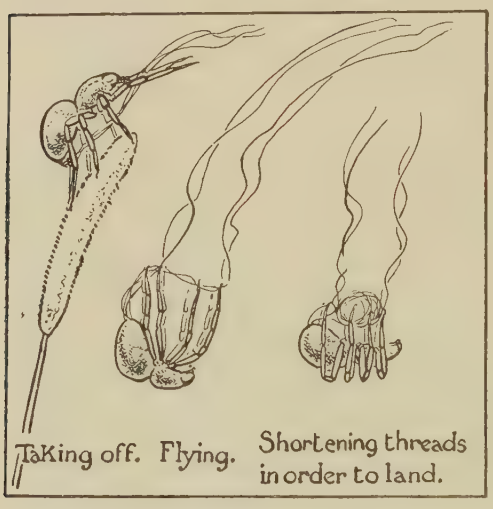
But most of the threads of silk to be seen shining in the sun in gardens and in the countryside are not spun by insects at all, but by spiders. Spiders use silk during the whole of their lives. To begin with, they are hatched out of eggs laid in a silken bag woven by the mother spider. Some kinds of spiders carry their egg-bags about with them, and are ready to defend them fiercely ; others leave them in cracks

in fences, or behind loose bark, and often, if these balls of silk are touched, they seem to come to life, for the startled spiderlings scatter in every direction, many of them spinning their first tiny threads to let themselves drop out of reach. When the danger is over, back they go to their cradle again.

It is only for a short time that the young spiders crowd together. There would not be food enough for them all if they stayed in one place, and they soon go off to find new hunting-grounds. When a spider travels it leaves a dainty trail of silk over the plants, for it seldom goes far without using a thread to lower itself from a height or to swing across a gap; and in autumn, when thousands of spiders all go a-roving at the same time, a whole meadow or a long hedgerow may be covered with a lovely veil: a fallen shower of gossamer.

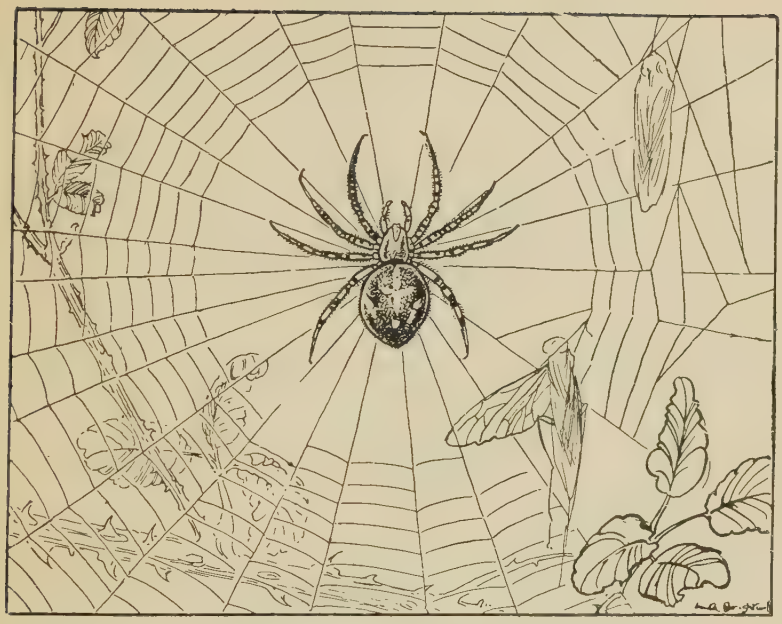
It was a schoolboy who found out, a long time ago, that gossamer is spider-silk, and who first described what happens. Restless young spiders—adventurers that have found a way of travelling long distances through the air without wings—climb to the top of tall plants or fences, and stand on tiptoe facing the wind while they spin a silken parachute. From hidden silk-bags jets of liquid silk flow out through tiny knobs, called spinnerets, at the hind end of each spider's body, till a little bunch of threads is floating behind it. The spiders then

throw themselves off their perches and are carried away by the wind. They cannot choose their direction, but they can rise or sink by adding to their parachutes or coiling up part of them. While the journey lasts the air is full of gossamer, and afterwards the fallen threads make fairy-like curtains and carpets, rainbow-coloured in the sunshine, sparkling with dewdrops or sometimes silvered with frost.



Silk is important to spiders in another way, too ; it is the material used in making traps to catch insects for food. There are many kinds of snares. The simplest is one of the usual travelling threads twisted among the grass. Then there are shapeless tangles, like the house-spiders' cobwebs ; and the orb-web made by the garden-spider or cross-spider.

How beautiful an orb-web looks when raindrops are strung like diamonds on the silken threads ! It may be a big web or a little web, but it always has the same pattern, for every garden-spider makes its



web in the same way—first the strong foundation lines or framework ; next the rays or spokes connecting the framework with the central hub ; and then a temporary coil of thread used, as a builder uses a scaffolding, while a finer spiral of sticky thread is put in place. Sometimes the spider remains in the centre of the web, but more often it carries a signal-line from the hub to a hiding-place near by.

Perhaps the most wonderful thing about web-making is that the young garden-spider does not have to learn how to do it. It spins a perfect orb-web the very first time it tries. MARIBEL EDWIN.

THE ARROW AND THE SONG

I SHOT an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

H. W. LONGFELLOW

A SUNNY shaft did I behold,
From sky to earth it slanted:
And poised therein a bird so bold—
Sweet bird, thou wert enchanted!

He sank, he rose, he twinkled, he trolled
Within that shaft of sunny mist;
His eyes of fire, his beak of gold,
All else of amethyst!

S. T. COLERIDGE.

WILL YOU WALK INTO MY TOUPIG?

A Travel Story

"WILL you walk into my toupig?" This is what Sitsak, the Eskimo, might say to us if we were passing by; for the Eskimo is kind to strangers.

Eskimos are the people who live in the north part of the great Dominion of Canada. Their forefathers dwelt on the coasts of the Arctic Ocean long before the white man went to live in America.

The word "toupig" means tent. It is Sitsak's summer home, and is placed on the seashore. The tent is made of seal skins sewn together by Sitsak's wife. This skin covering is spread over a framework of poles made from driftwood picked up on the shore. The framework is higher at the front than at the back.

Near the tent, Sitsak's "kayak," or boat, is drawn up. It is also made of seal skin over a framework of wood and whalebone. In the middle is a hole in which the rower sits, and he uses a paddle, broad at each end. The kayak is so light that Sitsak can carry it in one hand, yet seated in it he can brave the Arctic seas.

There are other toupigs close by, for summer and early autumn is the great time for fishing. It is a busy time for the men. In the late evening they go

out in their kayaks to spread the nets, and very soon they have to go out again to bring in the catch.

In the Far North the sea teems with fish. When the nets are opened, there seems to be a fish in every opening of the mesh, and three or four men may catch a thousand in one night.

It is a busy time for the women also. Their task is to clean the fish and hang them to dry in the sun. The dried fish are then packed in bunkers for the winter. They must be well covered up, lest a hungry fox, or even a polar bear should come along and help himself !

Summer is a merry time for the Eskimo children. The sun shines till midnight, so they cannot go to sleep. Their mothers do not even say, " Time to go to bed ! " They may stay up as long as they please, or as long as they can keep their eyes open.

In summer there are lots of other children to play with, for this is the time of year when the Eskimo visits his friends. The shore waters being no longer ice-bound, he comes with his wife and children in long, skin boats called " u-miaks." These have many rowers.

Friend or stranger is made welcome in the Eskimo's tent. When the day's work is over, they share their fish supper, and then chat or tell stories by the light of the midnight sun.

Only in the short summer, however, can Sitsak live in a toupig. When the dark days come, and the great freeze-up sets in, he must build a nice warm hut. The frame of this hut may be of drift-wood, or of stones, or even of blocks of snow, but is always covered with sods. The roof is kept up by poles.

A stove is used for cooking, but the house is heated by a number of lamps, which burn all night long. Sitsak's wife trims them carefully to prevent them from smoking.

There is only one room in the Eskimo house. Round the wall runs a low bench or platform on which the family eat and sleep. The bedclothes are soft bear-skins.

In autumn Sitsak goes off in his dog-sledge to hunt. He hunts the reindeer, which he calls "caribou," and whose flesh he counts a great treat. Of caribou hide he can make numberless things—harness for the dogs, clothes, boots, and gloves.

He also traps wild animals for the sake of their skins; those he wishes to catch most are the beaver, the marten, and the fox. There are many kinds of fox—red, blue, white, and silver, but the skin of the silver fox fetches the best price.

Sitsak's dress is of caribou skin. In winter he wears two coats. His under coat has the fur next his body, while his upper coat has the fur outside.

Both coats have hoods and lappets for his ears, for he must not get frostbite.

Sitsak's wife and children are dressed almost in the same way as himself. She carries the baby in her hood, where it is very cosy. An Eskimo's clothes have no hooks and eyes, or buttons and button-holes—just drawing strings and a leather belt. If he feels cold, he tightens his belt, and if he feels warmer he loosens it.

In deep mid-winter the sun is not seen at all, and there are only a few hours of daylight. This light is dim and cold, but all night long the stars shine very brightly.

At this time of year, Sitsak may build an " igloo " or snow-house, which is warmer still. It looks like a great white bowl turned upside down. The windows are blocks of ice. There is a hole in the roof for a stove pipe.

Neither his hut nor his igloo has a door. They are entered by a tunnel-like passage along which he must creep. It slopes down and then up, and is very dark. " Will you creep into my igloo ? " Sitsak might say to us now. If we do, he will receive us very kindly !

MARIE BAYNE.

THE WALRUS AND THE CARPENTER

(From *Alice through the Looking-Glass*)

THE sun was shining on the sea,
  Shining with all his might :
He did his very best to make
  The billows smooth and bright—
And this was odd, because it was
  The middle of the night.

The moon was shining sulkily,
  Because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there
  After the day was done—
" It's very rude of him," she said.
  " To come and spoil the fun."

The sea was wet as wet could be,
The lands were dry as dry,
You could not see a cloud because
No cloud was in the sky :
No birds were flying overhead—
There were no birds to fly.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand ;
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand :
" If this were only cleared away,"
They said, " it *would* be grand."

" If seven maids with seven mops
Swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose," the Walrus said,
" That they could get it clear ? "
" I doubt it," said the Carpenter,
And shed a bitter tear.

" O Oysters, come and walk with us,"
The walrus did beseech.
" A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk,
Along the briny beach :
We cannot do with more than four,
To give a hand to each."

The eldest Oyster looked at him,
But never a word he said :
The eldest Oyster winked his eye,
And shook his heavy head—
Meaning to say he did not choose
To leave the oyster bed.

But four young Oysters hurried up,
All eager for the treat ;
Their coats were brushed, their faces washed,
Their shoes were clean and neat—
And this was odd, because, you know,
They hadn't any feet.

Four other Oysters followed them,
And yet another four ;
And thick and fast they came at last,
And more, and more, and more—
All hopping through the sandy waves,
And scrambling to the shore.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Walked out a mile or so,
And then they rested on a rock
Conveniently low.
And all the little Oysters stood
And waited in a row.

" The time has come," the Walrus said,
" To talk of many things :
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing-wax—
Of cabbages—and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
And whether pigs have wings."

" But wait a bit," the Oysters cried,
" Before we have our chat ;
For some of us are out of breath,
And all of us are fat ! "
" No hurry ! " said the Carpenter.
They thanked him much for that.

" A loaf of bread," the Walrus said,
Is what we chiefly need :
Pepper and vinegar besides,
Are very good indeed—
Now if you're ready, Oysters dear,
We can begin to feed."

" But not on us ! " the Oysters cried,
Turning a little blue.
" After such kindness, that would be
A dismal thing to do ! "
" The night is fine," the Walrus said.
" Do you admire the view ? "

" It was so kind of you to come !
And you are very nice ! "
The Carpenter said nothing but
" Cut us another slice :
I wish you were not quite so deaf—
I've had to ask you twice ! "

" It seems a shame," the Walrus said,
" To play them such a trick,
After we've brought them out so far,
And made them trot so quick ! "
The Carpenter said nothing but
" The butter's spread too thick."

" I weep for you," the Walrus said :
" I deeply sympathize."
With sobs and tears he sorted out
Those of the largest size,
Holding his pocket-handkerchief
Before his streaming eyes.

" O Oysters," said the Carpenter,
" You've had a pleasant run !
Shall we be trotting home again ? "
But answer there was none—
And this was scarcely odd, because
They'd eaten every one.

LEWIS CARROLL.

THE PRINCESS AND THE SWINEHERD

PEOPLE IN THE PLAY

THE EMPEROR.
THE PRINCESS.
HER MAIDS OF HONOUR.
THE SWINEHERD.
ATTENDANTS.

ACT I

The Emperor's Palace

SCENE.—*The hall in the palace. Very little furniture; chairs, scattered untidily, here and there, one of them overturned; the rug or carpet rumpled up. Entrances,* Left *and* Right *near back of stage. When the curtain rises the* PRINCESS *is seen to be playing at ball with four or five Maids of Honour.* PRINCESS *to* Left *at front of the stage; Maids placed here and there round the room. They throw a golden ball from one to the other. The* PRINCESS *throws; Third Maid of Honour misses the catch.*

The Princess. Oh, you stupid, stupid thing! That is the third time you have missed the ball.

Third Maid [*muttering*]. It wasn't straight.

The Princess [*sharply*]. What did you say? Of course it was straight; Princesses always throw straight. [*To the others*] Don't they?

The Others. Oh yes! Yes! [*To the Third Maid*]. How *can* you say such things?

The Princess. Now don't stand chattering there; begin again, and remember, after this, the first who misses shan't play any more.

[*They throw again; the* PRINCESS *misses.*]

The Princess [*angrily*]. There! That was *your* fault; you can't throw straight any of you, and after all, it's a very silly game.

[*Enter* EMPEROR, Right *entrance. He wears a long embroidered dressing-gown, bedroom slippers down at the heel, and a golden crown, which being a little too big, slips down over one ear.*]

Emperor [*fussily*]. What is all this about? Dear, dear! Playing at ball again, are you? And what a mess you have made! Look at those chairs . . . and the rug . . . and your hair. . . . My dear daughter, you are not fit to be seen; go and tidy yourself directly; there is a handsome young Prince coming to see you.

[*The Maids of Honour bustle about putting things straight.*]

The Princess [*carelessly tossing the ball and catching it again*]. A Prince? Who is he, and why is he coming to see me?

The Emperor. He lives in the next kingdom, and he is coming to ask you to marry him.

The Princess. Why! That Prince? I shall certainly not marry *him*, and if he comes I shan't even see him.

The Emperor [*crossly*]. You are a naughty, tiresome girl, and it's time you were married. I am tired of your tantrums and hoity-toity ways. This is the sixth prince you have sent away.

The Princess. Well, they were none of them good enough; one had too big a nose, and another couldn't speak without gobbling like a turkey, and the rest were as stupid as owls, but this one is the worst of all.

The Emperor. He is very handsome, my love.

The Princess [*tossing her head*]. I don't care! His kingdom is such a little one, and his palace isn't a palace at all, only a plain, ordinary castle with not more than a hundred servants in it, and he doesn't wear a crown. (Do put yours straight, Papa.) Besides, I don't want to get married.

The Emperor [*a little angrily*]. But *I* wish you to . . . to . . . to . . .

The Princess [*stamping her foot*]. And I don't wish to . . . to . . . to . . .

The Emperor [*with a big sigh*]. Oh dear! What would the poor Empress say if she were alive!

[*A knock at the door. Enter by* Left, *two Servants with a silver casket.*]

The Emperor [*rubbing his hands joyfully*]. Now we shall see if this won't make you change your mind. This is a present for you, from the young Prince, my love.

The Princess [*clapping her hands*]. A present! Oh, if it should be a nice little pussy-cat! I want that most of all. [*Dancing round impatiently.*] Open it! Oh, do open it quickly!

The Emperor. Gently! Gently! You nearly trod on my toes just now.

[*The men open the casket, showing a rose tree with one rose in bloom.*]

One Maid of Honour. Oh, what a sweet pink colour!

Another. So delicate!

Another. And how prettily it is made!

The Emperor. It is more than pretty, it is charming.

The Princess [*touching the leaves*]. O Papa! It isn't made at all: it is a natural flower—a common thing—there are heaps like that in the garden.

The Attendant. May it please your Highness, this rose tree is not like other roses. It was taken from the grave of the Prince's father; it only blossoms once in every five years, and its scent is so sweet that, whoever smells it, forgets all care and sorrow in a moment.

The Princess. I haven't any cares or sorrows,

PHYLLIS BENTON

so you can take it away again ; I don't want it, and I don't believe it's anything but a common garden plant. You can tell the Prince that I won't marry him ; and if he comes to see me he can go away again, for I won't see *him*. Now you can go ! I am tired of silly presents and princes.

[*Exit Servants with casket.*]

The Emperor. You are a very rude girl !

The Princess [*catching him by the hands and making him dance*]. No, I'm not. . . . You are only pretending to be cross, you dear old Papa !

The Emperor. Stop ! Stop ! You take my breath away !

The Princess [*obeying*]. Very well ; you see what a good daughter I am ! I do exactly what you tell me. There ! [*Pushing him into chair.*] Sit down and I will make you tidy ! [*Putting his crown straight, and looking at him, head on one side.*] You are really very handsome, you know, Papa, when you don't look cross. [*To the Maids.*] Don't you think so ?

The Maids [*in chorus*]. Yes ! Yes ! He is really very handsome !

The Princess. There ! You see, they all think as I do !

[*A knock ; enter other two Servants with silver casket.*]

The *Emperor*. Why ! Here's another present

for you, my dear. Let us see what this is. It may be something more to your liking.

The Princess. No ! No ! Wait, if it is another rose I shall send it back at once.

The Servant. Your Highness, this is a nightingale that our Prince has sent you : it sings more beautifully than any other bird in the world.

The Princess. What is it made of ?

The Servant. Made of . . . ?

The Princess. Yes, what is it made of, stupid ? Gold or silver or diamonds or what ?

The Servant. Your Highness, this is a real nightingale.

The Princess [*crossly*]. What ! An ugly brown thing with feathers and a beak ?

The Servant. It sings most beautifully.

The Princess [*angrily*]. No, no ! Take it away; I won't have it.

The Emperor. Let us hear it once, my love.

The Princess [*stamping her foot*]. Take it away *at once !* And tell the Prince he needn't send me any more presents like that. A gold bird or a silver one that you can wind up would be much nicer. [*More angrily still.*] What are you staring at ? Take it away at once, or I shall *scream.*

The Emperor. My dear child, pray calm yourself ! [*To the Servants*] Take it away, I beg of you : the Princess is not very well to-day. [*Exit Servants.*]

The Princess [*crossly*]. Nonsense, Papa, there is nothing the matter with me. [*Another knock.*] Oh! If that is another present from the Prince, it shan't come in.

[*Enter* PRINCE *disguised as* SWINEHERD. *His face is stained with brown and smudged with black. His clothes are ragged and old.*]

The Prince. Good day to you, my lord the Emperor! Can you give me work to do in the palace?

The Emperor [*stroking his beard*]. Why . . . yes. . . . Hum! That is lucky! I want some one to take care of the pigs, for we have a great many of them. Yes, you shall be appointed Imperial Swineherd.

The Prince. Good . . . er . . . I mean . . . thank you, your Majesty; I have been looking for work for a long time.

The Princess [*to the Maids*]. That is why he has such a dirty face, I suppose.

The Maids. And look at his clothes. . . . Ugh!

The Emperor. There is a little hut, close to the pigsties: you can have that for a house if you like.

The Prince. Thank you, that will suit me very well. I want somewhere to work.

The Princess. What do you work at, Swineherd?

The Prince. Sometimes I make things that pretty

princesses like to buy : rattles and toys, and magic pots and pans, and musical boxes.

The Princess. Well, we shall see ; if you make pretty things I shall certainly buy them, but you don't look as if you could do anything except take care of pigs. I hope you wash your hands before you work.

The Emperor. My love ! My love ! You are too forward. Run away now and play ; the rain has stopped, and the garden will be looking pretty. Swineherd, you may go to your work.

The *Prince.* Thank you, your Majesty.

[*Exit* Left.]

The Princess [*calling after him*]. I shall come and see your pretty things to-morrow, Swineherd !

[*She picks up ball, throws it at the* EMPEROR, *hitting him, and runs out* Right, *laughing, followed by Maids.*]

The Emperor [*with a big sigh, rubbing his head*]. It is certainly high time she was married !

ACT II

SCENE.—*Outside the Swineherd's Hut*

[*Entrances,* Left *and* Right. *When the curtain rises the* PRINCE *is discovered sitting on an old stool in*

the doorway of the hut. He is polishing a small iron pot very carefully.]

The Prince. There's a good day's work for you! [*Looking at the pot.*] Aha! my fine, my delicate Princess, you will have to pay for this. I can't sell such valuable goods for nothing. But what proud ways and looks she has! She must be humbled. I heard her say my castle is not big enough to hold such a grand lady. . . . Well, porridge-pot [*holding up pot*], she shall pay a hundred kisses for you, neither more nor less, and then we shall see what we shall see: a good many things can happen to princes in disguise. Dear! [*with a sigh*] it is a pity she is so spoilt: she would make me a fine wife and a pretty one too.

The Princess [*off the stage*]. Come along! Quickly now, this way! I want to see what the creature has made to-day.

[*The* PRINCE *starts whistling, and rubbing the pot. Enter* PRINCESS *followed by Maids of Honour. They stand in a group, watching: the* PRINCE *takes no notice, but goes on whistling and working.*]

The Princess [*after a pause*]. Swineherd!

[*The* PRINCE *starts, looks up, and then begins working again.*]

The Princess [*more sharply*]. Swineherd! Don't you know who is speaking to you?

The Maids [*in chorus*]. He has not any manners !

The Princess [*going nearer*]. What have you got there ?

The Prince. A porridge-pot, your Highness. [*Whistles and rubs again.*]

The Princess [*disappointed*]. A porridge-pot ! What a stupid thing ! Have you not a musical box ? [*Angrily.*] Stop whistling this moment, and answer me : I can't stand near nasty pigsties for ever.

The Prince. This is all I have made to-day, Princess, but if you will wait a moment I shall show you what it can do.

[*Goes into hut, coming back again quickly with a jug of very hot water which he pours into the pot.*]

The Princess. What can a silly old porridge-pot do ?

The Prince [*placing it on a stool*]. You will see, if you come close and put your finger on the edge of it.

[*The* PRINCESS *obeys, holding up her long skirt and stepping daintily.*]

The Princess [*with her finger on the pot*]. Oh ! Delightful ! Listen, all of you ! This pot tells us what every one is having for dinner. The Chamberlain is having cutlets to-day : the Treasurer, French soup : the Court Herald, eggs and bacon and radishes and tea. . . .

The Maids [*in chorus, clapping hands*]. Delightful ! Charming ! Tell us more, dear Princess ?

The Princess. The Tailor is having roast beef and Yorkshire pudding: the Cobbler, ham sandwiches and . . . Oh what a lovely pot!

The Maids [*putting their fingers on*]. The Emperor will have bread and milk and honey for supper: the Chamberlain . . .

The Princess [*interrupting*]. Yes, yes, I know. Oh, and listen, the pot is singing now. Hush! Ah! that is my piece too; I play it with one finger. [*Dancing round in time and singing.*]

The Prince. It sings much more loudly if it is put on the fire.

The Princess. I must have it for my own, that is very certain.

The Maids. Yes, yes!

The Princess. What will you take for it, Swineherd?

The Prince. A hundred kisses from your Highness is my price.

The Princess. That is absurd: you are out of your senses.

[*Walks away followed by the Maids. The* PRINCE *takes up the pot as if to enter the hut with it. He whistles the same tune as the pot.*]

The Princess [*hearing it and coming back*]. I will give you my gold ball for it [PRINCE *shakes his head*], and my golden casket, and my ring with the rubies.

The Prince. A hundred kisses.

PHYLLIS DENTON

The Princess [*as if thinking aloud*]. Well, I suppose I must be kind to the poor ; I am the Emperor's daughter. [*To the* PRINCE] I will give you ten kisses, and you may take the rest from the ladies of the Court. [*To herself*] We will just peck at his cheek.

The Maids. No, no, we should not like that at all.

The Princess [*sharply*]. What are you grumbling at ? If I can kiss him, surely you can.

The Prince. A hundred kisses from the Princess or I keep the pot.

The Princess. No, you won't ; I must have it. [*To the Maids*] Stand round me, then, and spread out your dresses so that no one may see. [*They do so. The* PRINCE *kneels.*] Now count, and be sure you count rightly.

The Maids. One, two, three, four, etc.

[*As the counting goes on, enter the* EMPEROR. *They are all too busy to notice him.*]

The Emperor [*stopping in surprise*]. Whatever is all this noise about ? What are they doing near the pigsties ? [*Goes closer on tiptoe.*]

The Maids. Eighty-two, eighty-three, eighty-four, eighty-five, eighty-six.

The Emperor. What is this ? Well I never !

[*Gives the* PRINCESS *a slap with his slipper.*]

The Princess [*with a cry*]. O Papa !

The Emperor [*in a great rage*]. Don't call me Papa again : I won't have it. I never heard of such

a thing . . . an Emperor's daughter kissing a Swineherd? Off with you both, I shall have nothing more to do with you.

The Princess [*beginning to cry*]. O Papa! I . . .

The Emperor. Not a word, Miss, not another word. If you are so fond of the Swineherd you shall marry him; I will have nothing more to do with you; you are no daughter of mine. March! March, I say!

The Princess [*crying bitterly*]. I will never do it again. . . . Oh! . . . Oh!

The Emperor [*angrier than ever*]. Do it again if you like . . . a thousand times. . . . It doesn't matter to me. You shall not enter my doors again. [*To the Maids*] Come, all of you, and don't huddle there like scared rabbits. Follow me, and if one of you dare speak to that girl again, out you go, neck and crop! [*Drives them all before him to* Left.]

The Princess [*running after him and catching his gown*]. Don't leave me! Oh, don't leave me!

The Emperor [*pulling himself away from her*]. If you and your Swineherd are not out of here in half an hour, I shall send soldiers to chase you. [*Exit.*]

The Princess [*crouching on the ground, still crying*]. Oh! . . . Oh! . . . What an unhappy girl I am! . . . If I had only married the handsome young prince!

The Prince. Well, it is no use crying, you will

have to come with me now. It serves you right; you laughed at the Prince's gifts, and yet you would kiss a common man like me for the sake of a porridge-pot.

The Princess [*stopping her sobs*]. Why? How do you know that?

The Prince. I know many things. Come, get up: we have a long way to walk before we get home.

The Princess. I am not going home with *you.*

The Prince. You will have to: who else will take you in?

The Princess. I don't care: I will starve, or die; I'll do anything, but I won't marry you.

The Prince. Nobody asked you to: I won't have you for my wife. Come along [*pulling her up*], you shall be my servant and clean my house and cook my dinner.

The Princess [*bursting into tears again*]. O Papa! Papa! Papa! How could you be so cruel!

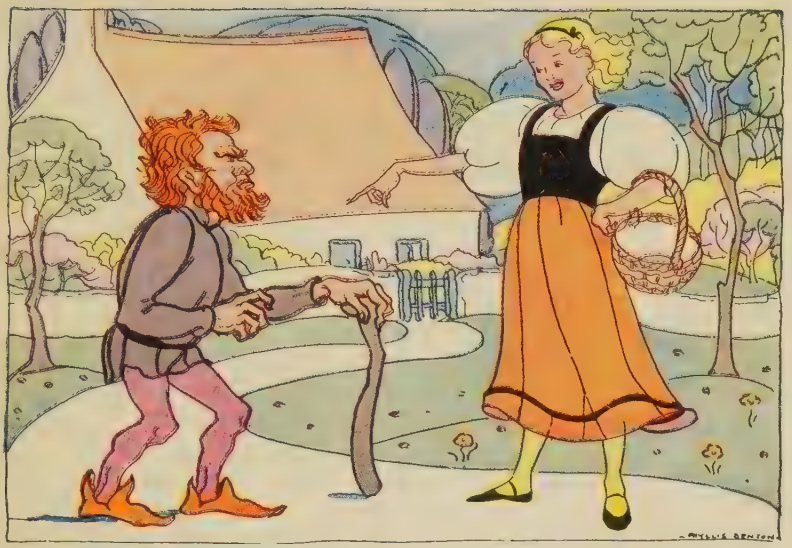
The Prince. He won't hear you, however loud you cry; you have to come with me. Here, take the pot, I have other things to carry.

[*Puts it in her hands, enters the hut, and comes out again with package.*]

Now, step out, or the soldiers will chase us.

[*Takes her hand and pulls her out by* Right, *not too roughly and with a rather kind smile on his face.*]

ENID BLYTON.



THE DWARF

"Now, Jinnie, my dear, to the dwarf be off,
That lives in Barberry Wood,
And fetch me some honey; but be sure you don't laugh—
He hates little girls that are rude, are rude,
He hates little girls that are rude."

Jane tapped at the door of the house in the wood,
And the dwarf looked over the wall,
He eyed her so queer, 'twas as much as she could
To keep from laughing at all, at all,
To keep from laughing at all.

His shoes down the passage came clod, clod, clod,
And when he opened the door
He croaked so harsh, 'twas as much as she could
To keep from laughing the more, the more,
To keep from laughing the more.

As there, with his bushy red beard, he stood,
Pricked out to double its size,
He squinted so cross, 'twas as much as she could
To keep the tears out of her eyes, her eyes,
To keep the tears out of her eyes.

He slammed the door, and went clod, clod, clod,
But while in the porch she bides,
He squealed so fierce, 'twas as much as she could
To keep from cracking her sides, her sides,
To keep from cracking her sides.

He threw a pumpkin over the wall,
And melons and apples beside,
So thick in the air that to see them fall,
She laughed, and laughed, till she cried, cried, cried,
Jane laughed and laughed till she cried.

Down fell her teardrops a pit-a-pat-pat,
And red as a rose she grew :

"Kah! Kah!" said the dwarf, "is it crying
you're at?
It's the very worst thing you could do, do, do,
It's the very worst thing you could do."

He slipped like a monkey up into a tree,
He shook her down cherries like rain;
"See now," says he, cheeping, "a blackbird I be,
Laugh, laugh, little Jinnie, again-gain-gain,
Laugh, laugh, little Jinnie again."

Ah me! what a strange, what a gladsome duet
From a house in the deeps of a wood!
Such shrill and such harsh voices never met yet
A-laughing as loud as they could,
A-laughing as loud as they could.

Come, Jinnie, come dwarf, cocksparrow, and bee,
There's a ring gaudy-green in the dell,
Sing, sing, ye sweet cherubs, that flit in the tree;
La! who can draw tears from a well, well, well,
Who ever drew tears from a well!

WALTER DE LA MARE.

SEPTEMBER is a princess fair,
With bright blue eyes and yellow hair,
And everywhere, to young and old,
She scatters out her shining gold.

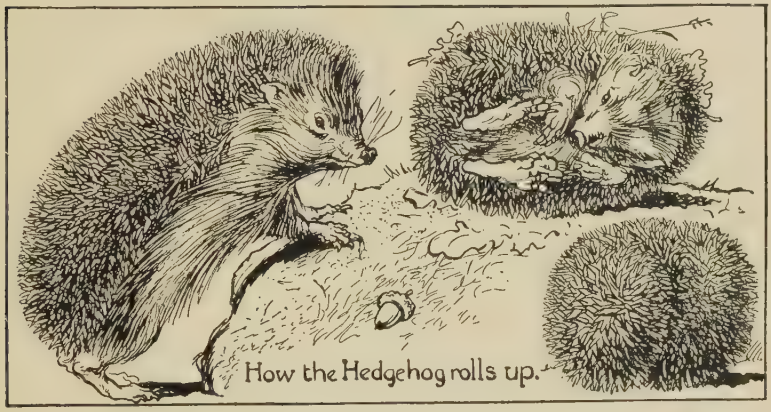
Winter-Sleep

Some animals are called warm-blooded, others cold-blooded. This does not mean that the blood is always either warm or cold, for actually the blood of a cold-blooded animal may be quite warm. What it does mean is that the body of a warm-blooded animal, such as a dog or a sparrow, has much the same degree of warmth all the year round, while the body-temperature of a cold-blooded animal —a frog or a snake, for instance—rises and falls with the changes in temperature of the air or the water round about it.

When a snake comes out of a hole and lies basking in the sun its blood becomes warmer ; but when a dog runs about on a hot day it hangs out its tongue and some of the heat of its blood escapes, and so its temperature remains the same as when it was sitting in the shade. On a cold day a boy may *feel* cold, but if he is healthy he can make sure that his body-temperature does not go down. All he has to do is to put on some more clothes or to stamp his feet and rub his hands to spread the warmth through his body.

Now, between these two groups there are a few

animals which are not cold-blooded, but which are not perfectly warm-blooded either. Among them are the hedgehog, the bat, and the dormouse.



How the Hedgehog rolls up.

In summer these animals eat and sleep and look after their families, just like rats and rabbits and weasels, and all the other perfectly warm-blooded animals ; but when winter comes they cannot produce enough heat within their bodies to make up for the heat that passes from them into the cold air. They would become too numb to move about and hunt for food, and before long would die of cold and hunger, if they had not found a way of escaping this danger. They go to sleep.

The hedgehog is the soundest winter-sleeper in Britain. It goes to bed in October or November,

N.B.—In each of the pictures in this chapter an acorn is drawn to show the relative size of each animal.

and usually stays there until March or April without waking up to take a single meal.

Spines are not so good as fur for keeping out cold winds, but before the hedgehog retires for the winter it eats plenty of slugs and beetles, and puts on an extra coat of fat; and sometimes it adds another overcoat by rolling about among fallen leaves till its prickly skin is thickly covered. As the nights grow colder the hedgehog feels more and more drowsy and unwilling to move, and, at last, it curls up among the leaves and moss in its chosen den and falls into the long, deep sleep of winter.

A hole in a bank, a hollow log, or a rabbit-burrow makes a good sleeping-place, for the air in such small spaces is warmer than it is outside, and there is not much danger of the sleeper being disturbed. The fox is the only enemy likely to try to

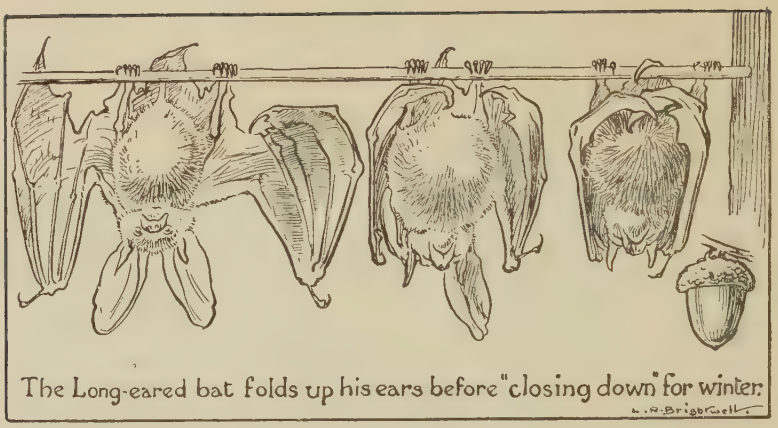
reach the hedgehog, since the badger, its worst enemy in summer, is a "winter snoozer" itself,

though not a true hibernator, as the winter-sleepers are called.

Another winter-sleeper is the dormouse. Even in summer this little animal really is as sleepy as the famous dormouse in *Alice in Wonderland*, at least during the day ; and in winter it sleeps nearly all the time. The plump dormouse that creeps into its cosy nest in October, and makes a ball of itself with its nose between its hind feet and its tail over its head, is a thin and hungry creature when it comes out again in April. It may have wakened and nibbled a few nuts now and then, for it is not such a heavy sleeper as the hedgehog, but for most of the time it has been living on the fat stored in its own body in autumn, and by spring this is nearly used up.

Squirrels are sometimes called winter-sleepers, and they do sleep more than usual in cold, dull weather ; but they are only " winter-snoozers," for on fine days in midwinter they may be seen scampering about the woods, looking for the stores of food they made in autumn. Bats, however, are true winter-sleepers. They do not make stores, and when the insects they live on become scarce, and the nights grow chilly, they give up the struggle to face hard times. Hanging themselves up by their toes in some sheltered corner, they wrap their skin-wings round their furry bodies and go to sleep.

If these winter-sleepers fell asleep in the open



The Long-eared bat folds up his ears before "closing down" for winter.

they would be frozen to death, but in the snug holes and sheltered nooks they choose they sleep safely through an ordinary winter. It is a strange sleep; the sleeper is scarcely breathing and its heart is beating very slowly and feebly; it is just alive and no more. Its body is like a low fire that goes on burning quietly in the centre long after it seems to have gone out; and just as the fire can be stirred up and made to blaze again, the sleeper can wake up and become lively when the winter is over.

While the perfectly warm-blooded animals have to solve the problems of finding food and keeping warm in winter, the hedgehog, dormouse, bat, and some others evade it altogether by this habit of winter-sleep or hibernation; and so they may be said to have turned their weakness into strength.

MARIBEL EDWIN.

THE PLOUGH

ABOVE yon sombre swell of land
  Thou see'st the dawn's grave orange hue,
With one pale streak like yellow sand,
  And over that a vein of blue.

The air is cold above the woods;
  All silent is the earth and sky,
Except with his own lonely moods,
  The blackbird holds a colloquy.

Over the broad hill creeps a beam,
  Like hope that gilds a good man's brow;
And now ascends the nostril-stream
  Of stalwart horses come to plough.

Ye rigid Ploughmen, bear in mind,
  Your labour is for future hours:
Advance—spare not—nor look behind—
  Plough deep and straight with all your powers!

RICHARD HENRY HORNE.

NAOMI, THE FRUIT-SELLER

A Travel Story

HARK to the cry of Naomi, the fruit-seller, in the market-place of Kingston, Jamaica :

" Ripe bananas gwine pass (going past) ! Buy yo' (your) yams ! Buy yo' sweet potatoes ! Buy yo' pretty posies ! "

The word Jamaica means " well-watered." It is one of the most beautiful of the West Indian Islands, and is part of the British Empire.

To the east rise the lofty peaks of the Blue Mountains, from which flow numberless rivers and streams that rush and tumble in foaming cascades to the sea.

These water the island, and make it a garden of delight in which every sort of fruit and flower and root-crop, tree and fern, is to be found.

In olden days Jamaica was famed chiefly for its sugar. The rich sugar-planter lived in his stately mansion house, his sugar being sown and reaped, and the cane crushed by hundreds of negro slaves. The raw sugar was then shipped to other lands, where it was cleared or " refined."

Here and there on the island may still be seen the ruins of these great houses, as well as of the windmills used to crush the cane.

To-day, however, though sugar is still grown, it is no longer the chief product of Jamaica. Fruit-growing has taken its place, and fleets of swift steamers now carry Jamaican bananas, oranges, grape-fruit, pine-apples, etc., to all parts of the world.

The fruit-growers are mostly white men from Britain or America ; but the work of the plantations is done by free, wage-earning negroes. The curse of slavery has long since passed, and we are glad to think that, one hundred years ago, the rulers of our country took the first step by setting free all our black slaves.

Tobacco, coffee, and cocoa are also grown in Jamaica, but the banana is her best friend.

It is said that if a banana-slip is planted on the island the soil is so rich that, in a few months, the sapling will have become a young tree, bearing a huge bunch of fruit.

Now let us return to Naomi, the fruit-seller. Hear her cry once more, "Ripe bananas gwine pass!"

By her side are Virginia and Martha, her two daughters, girls of nine and ten. They have just come in from their little farm up-country, where Naomi's husband raises fruit and flowers.

All three have heavy baskets on their heads. These they do not hold up with their hands—a

negress would scorn to do this. With head erect, chest flung forward, arms swinging freely, mother and daughters have trudged cheerfully and easily, with their headloads, along the dusty highways.

Their cotton frocks are bright and stiffly starched. A gay handkerchief is knotted round Naomi's head. Their teeth are white and flashing; and when at length they lay their baskets on the ground, it is hard to tell which is the brighter—the colours in Naomi's turban, or the colours of their flowers.

Many other negroes are there with their wares. Some are "maroons," or mountain people. These may have come by train, for there is a good railway on the island, or they may have brought their goods to market on a donkey with panniers on each side.

In the panniers are live fowls, eggs, or fruit. The father rides the donkey. His wife walks. She has a baby in her arms, and a basket of rare orchids on her head. When the market is over, she will put the piccaninny in one of the empty panniers, and he will ride home.

One can buy all kinds of things in Kingston market—pepper-pods and spices, baskets made of coloured grass and snow-white reeds, walking-sticks of ebony, or palm, or cinnamon wood; jackass-rope, which is a negro name for cheap tobacco. It is sold by the yard!

In the middle of the courtyard is a fountain,

PHYLLIS BENTON

round which the tired donkeys rest with drooping head, or munch hot bundles of hay. Here, too, the merry children frisk about, heedless of the sun.

When their flowers are sold, Virginia and Martha join the other children at the fountain, or perhaps they wander off to one of the piers, to watch the famous diving boys.

These boys are as much at home in the water as on land. When the big ocean " liners " anchor in Kingston Bay, out shoot the diving boys in their small boats. They hope that some passenger will toss a sixpence or a shilling overboard.

When this happens, half a dozen boys plunge head-foremost into the sea. " Finders are keepers " is their motto, and soon one of them comes up with the prize. Then some one else tosses over a coin, and down they go once more !

Virginia and Martha think this great fun. But they must not linger, for now the market will be over. They hasten back, and find their mother tying up the baskets.

A cool breeze is blowing from the sea. The air is fresh and filled with the scent of wild flowers.

Behind the Blue Mountains the sun is setting, as Naomi and her children walk peacefully back to their homestead in beautiful Jamaica.

MARIE BAYNE.

THE FAIRY TAILOR

SITTING on the flower-bed, beneath the hollyhocks,
I spied the tiny tailor who makes the fairies' frocks ;
There he sat a-stitching all the afternoon,
And sang a little ditty to a quaint wee tune :

" Grey for the goblins, blue for the elves,
Brown for the little gnomes that live by themselves,
White for the pixies that dance on the green—
But where shall I find me a robe for the Queen ? "

All about the garden his little men he sent,
Up and down and in and out unceasingly they went.
Here they stole a blossom, there they pulled a leaf,
And bound them up with gossamer into a glowing sheaf.

Petals of the pansy for little velvet shoon,
Silk of the poppy for a dance beneath the moon,
Lawn of the jessamine, damask of the rose,
To make their pretty kirtles and airy furbelows.

Never roving pirates back from Southern Seas
Brought a store of treasures home more beautiful than these.

They heaped them all about him in a sweet, gay pile,
But still he kept a-stitching and a-singing all the while :

" Grey for the goblins, blue for the elves,
Brown for the little gnomes that live by themselves,
White for the pixies that dance on the green,
But who shall make a royal gown to deck the Fairy Queen ? "

ROSE FYLEMAN.

THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA

A "Did You Ever?" Story

ONCE upon a time there was a Prince who wanted to marry a Princess. He travelled all over the world looking for a gentle, tender maid, but the Princesses he met were neither gentle nor tender, though many of them were very beautiful.

At last he came home again, very sad, thinking that he would not be able to marry at all. The King and Queen welcomed him back, but they were sorry he could not find the Princess he wanted.

One night, a little while afterwards, there came a great storm over the city. The thunder rolled and roared, the lightning flashed, and the rain fell down so heavily that it was dangerous to walk through it. Every one stayed at home and trembled.

Suddenly there came a knocking at the city gate. The watchman was much too frightened to go and open it, and he did not stir a step. The knocking came again, and yet again.

"Hark!" said the King. "There is a knocking at the city gate! The watchman must be asleep! Perhaps it is some poor traveller lost in this dreadful storm. I will go myself and see."

He took a lantern and went down through the rain to the city gate. He swung it open, and saw a girl standing outside, drenched with rain, shivering

with the cold and the wet. Her wet hair was hanging like little rats' tails all round her head, and her clothes were dripping with water.

Her shoes gurgled and squelched as she took a step forward and caught hold of the King's arm.

" Let me in," she begged. " I am lost, and all my servants have run away from me, frightened of this dreadful storm."

" Who are you ? " asked the King, flashing the light of the lantern over her.

" I am a Princess," she answered, and her voice was soft and gentle through the noise of the storm.

" A Princess ! " thought the King. " Well, she doesn't look like one, though her voice is sweet and she speaks beautifully."

He took her hand, and led her into the city. He closed the gate, and then ran up the puddled streets to the palace, taking the wet girl with him.

The Queen was waiting for him.

" Good gracious ! " she cried, " what a wet piece of goods you have brought with you ! Come with me, maiden, and let me give you some dry clothes and some hot milk ! "

She hurried the poor Princess into a warm room, and told her to take off her wet things and dry herself. Then she sent for some hot milk, and gave it to the Princess to drink.

" Who are you ? " she asked.

" I am a Princess," answered the maiden.

The Queen looked at her. Now that her hair was dry, and her cheeks pink with the warmth of the fire, the Princess looked beautiful. She was graceful, and all her movements were gentle. Her voice was soft and low as a wood-pigeon's.

" If only you are a *real* Princess," thought the Queen, " I believe you are just the gentle, tender girl my son has been looking for. But I wonder if you are telling the truth, and are really and truly a Princess. However, I can soon find out."

She went to get a bedroom ready for the Princess to sleep in. First of all she took all the bedding off the bedstead. Then she took a round, hard pea and put it at the bottom. On top of the pea she placed twenty mattresses one above another. On top of these she piled twenty eiderdowns, which made the bed so high that it needed a big chair to help any one to get into it !

" Now we shall see ! " said the Queen to herself. " Just that little pea will soon prove whether the maiden is a real Princess or not ! "

She fetched the Princess and told her to get into bed and sleep well till the morning, and then they would send soldiers to find the lost servants. The Princess climbed on to the bed, and snuggled down, saying she was very sleepy. Then the old Queen left her.

In the morning she came into the Princess's bedroom with a cup of tea.

"How have you slept?" she asked.

"Oh, very badly indeed!" answered the Princess, yawning. "I have hardly slept a wink all night long. Goodness only knows what was in the bed, but it seemed as if I were lying on something terribly hard, so that I am black and blue all over my body! It was simply dreadful!"

Then the Queen was glad, for she knew the maiden had spoken the truth, and was a real Princess after all. For no one but a real Princess could feel a pea through twenty mattresses and twenty eiderdowns!

She ran to tell her son, the Prince, that she had found a real Princess whose voice and heart were as tender and gentle as her slim body. The Prince was delighted, and he fell in love with her as soon as he saw her smiling at him.

He asked her to marry him, and when the Princess said she would, every one was pleased and excited.

As for the pea, it was taken out of the bed, and put in a museum for all the world to see. It had a label by it, which said:

"This is the pea that our Princess felt through twenty mattresses and twenty eiderdowns."

And, if it hasn't been stolen, it must be in the museum still!

HANS ANDERSEN

AS LUCY WENT A-WALKING

As Lucy went a-walking one morning cold and fine,
There sate three crows upon a bough, and three times three is nine :
Then " Oh ! " said Lucy, " in the snow, it's very plain to see
A witch has been a-walking in the fields in front of me."

Then stepped she light and heedfully across the frozen snow,
And plucked a bunch of elder-twigs that near a pool did grow :

And, by-and-by, she comes to seven shadows in one place
Stretched black by seven poplar trees against the sun's bright face.

She looks to left, she looks to right, and in the midst she sees
A little pool of water clear and frozen 'neath the trees ;
Then down beside its margent in the crusty snow she kneels,
And hears a magic belfry a-ringing with sweet bells.

Clear sang that faint, far, merry peal, then silence on the air,
And icy-still the frozen pool and poplars standing there :
Then lo ! as Lucy turned her head and looked along the snow,
She sees a witch—a witch she sees, come frisking to and fro.

Her scarlet, buckled shoes they clicked, her heels a-twinkling high ;
With mistletoe her steeple-hat she bobbed as she capered by ;
But never a dint, or mark, or print, in the whiteness for to see,
Though danced she light, though danced she fast, though danced she lissomely.

It seemed 'twas diamonds in the air, or little flakes of frost :
It seemed 'twas golden smoke around, or sunbeams lightly tost ;
It seemed an elfin music like to reeds and warblers rose :
" Nay ! " Lucy whispered, " it's the wind that through the branches flows."

And as she peeps, and as she peeps, 'tis no more one, but three,
And eye of bat, and downy wing of owl within the tree,
And the bells of that sweet belfry a-pealing as before,
And now it is not three she sees, and now it is not four.

" Oh, who are you," then Lucy cries, " that in a dreadful ring,
All muffled up in brindled shawls, do caper, frisk, and spring ? "
" A witch and witches, one and nine," they straight to her reply,
And looked upon her narrowly, with green and needle eye.

Then Lucy sees in clouds of gold sweet cherry trees upgrow,
And bushes of red roses that bloomed above the snow;

She smells, all faint, the almond-boughs, blowing so
wild and fair,
And doves with milky eyes ascend fluttering in the
air.

Clear flowers she sees, like tulip buds, go floating by
like birds,
With wavering tips that warbled sweetly strange
enchanted words ;
And, as with robes of amethyst, the twigs with
lamps were hung,
And clusters of green emeralds like fruit upon them
clung.

" O witches nine, ye dreadful nine, O witches seven
and three !
Whence come these wondrous things that I this
Christmas morning see ? "
But straight, as in a clap, when she of Christmas says
the word,
Here is the snow, and there the sun, but never bloom
nor bird ;

Nor warbling flame, nor gleaming rope of amethyst
there shows,
Nor bunches of green emeralds, nor belfry, well,
and rose,

Nor cloud of gold, nor cherry tree, nor witch in
brindled shawl,
But like a dream that vanishes, so vanished were they
all.

When Lucy sees, and only sees three crows upon a
bough,
And earthly twigs, and bushes hidden white in driven
snow,
Then " Oh," said Lucy, " three times three is nine—
I plainly see
Some witch has been a-walking in the fields in front
of me."

WALTER DE LA MARE.

No scene is continually and untiringly loved, but one rich by joyful human labour; smooth in field; fair in garden; full in orchard; ringing with voices of vivid existence. No air is sweet that is silent; it is only sweet when full of low currents of under-sound—triplets of birds, and murmur and chirp of insects, and deep-toned voices of men, and wayward trebles of childhood.

JOHN RUSKIN.

NATURE WONDERS

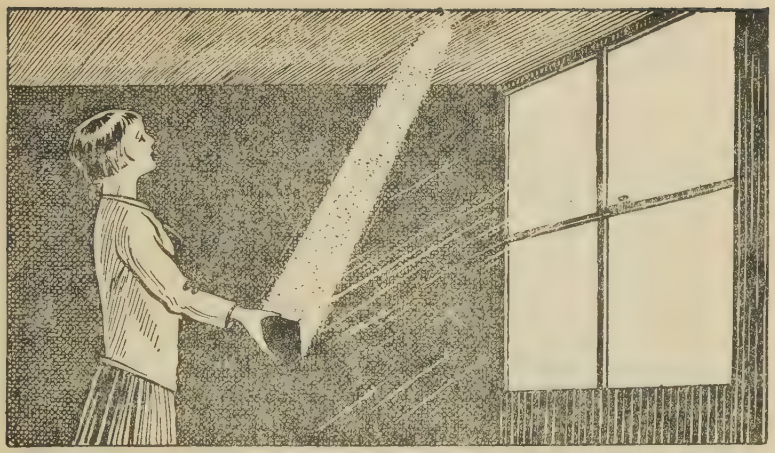
Dust and Clouds

It is always exciting to watch something that appears and disappears as if it had a "cloak of invisibility" like a prince in a fairy tale. That is why most people like to look at the tiny specks dancing in the beam of light that steals between the curtains into a dark room. They know that when the curtains are drawn right back the "motes" will vanish, for in broad daylight there is no sign of dust floating about the room.

There is dust in the air of every room, and much of it is so fine that it cannot be seen till a beam of light shows it up against the darkness. Instead of needing cloaks to hide them, these specks of dust must have cloaks of light before they can be seen at all.

Children playing at signalling with small mirrors can exchange messages from a long way off. When they are standing far apart they cannot see each other's mirrors, but the flashes of light are perfectly clear. In the same way it is not the finer motes themselves that are seen, but simply the play of light on their surfaces.

Dust and light together make pretty patterns in a shaded room; but, what is much more wonderful



is, that it is dust that makes the sky so beautiful. There is dust in the heart of every raindrop and snowflake, in every cloud or wisp of mist, no matter how white it looks.

During the day warm currents of air rise from the earth and carry the dust higher and higher ; and at the same time the sun is steadily drawing water from land and sea. Sometimes this moisture can be seen rising like steam, or collecting in a low fog ; more often the water-vapour in the air remains invisible till it reaches the mountain-tops or the floating dust still higher in the cold upper air.

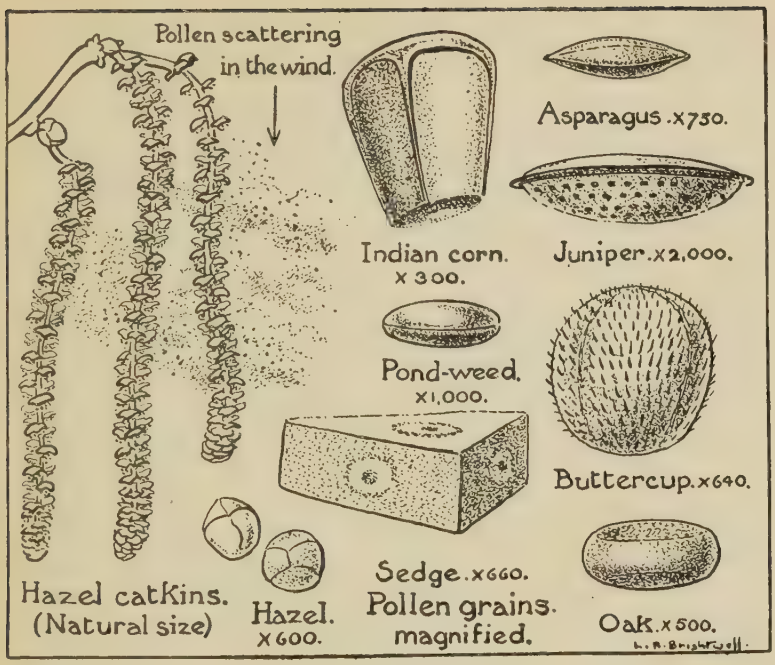
Before water-vapour can change into liquid water it must touch something solid. This happens in the sky, for even the tiniest dust-mote will serve as the centre of a droplet of water. When a great many

of these droplets are crowded together a cloud is formed. Sooner or later the dust in the cloud will be brought back to earth inside drops of rain ; but more dust will drift up and collect more water from the air, and so new clouds will appear in the sky.

Clouds often stay in the sky for a long time. They are curtains and blankets for the earth, for they shelter it from the glare of the sun, and also keep it from losing too much heat at night. The warm air rising in the daytime helps to keep the clouds from falling ; but when the air cannot hold any more water-vapour, and the dust-motes in the clouds are very heavily coated with water, down come the clouds in the form of rain.

The clouds themselves are fascinating to watch, for, as their shapes change, magic lakes and mountains appear and disappear, and giants and fairy chariots seem to come and go. Perhaps even more beautiful are the colours of the sky : the blue beyond the white clouds, the rose of dawn, the shimmer of twilight and the sunset fires. All these owe their beauty to the dust. They are due to the play of light on the fine dust-motes floating in the upper air.

It may seem strange that many of the most beautifully coloured things in the world have no colour in them at all ! Pink dye may be squeezed from a geranium petal, but when a rainbow-tinted



piece of mother-of-pearl is ground to powder all that is left is a little heap of white chalk. It is the play of light on the surface of the shell that gives it those delicate colours. Whiteness is caused in the same way. No dye comes out when a narcissus petal is squeezed, though it becomes transparent. The bubbles of sap in the flower act as mirrors to reflect the light, and when they are broken the petal loses its white appearance.

High up in the air the dust-motes, and the droplets of water some of them have gathered round

them, are breaking up the sunlight into rays of different colours and scattering beauty about the clouds. And yet, without the light, most of that dust would look plain and ordinary, for—what is it?

It is not all soot, but soot is there, and wind-blown sand, and the ash from volcanoes—it has often been noticed that gorgeous sunsets follow the eruption of a volcano—salt from sea-spray, fragments of wool and cotton, grains of starch, hairs, scraps of down, and pollen-grains. Sometimes there is so much pollen in the air that certain people suffer from hay-fever, and the pollen may even be seen as "showers of sulphur." Sometimes there is so much soot that thick black fogs nearly smother the towns. All this is coarse dust, but the same materials give the fine dust that paints the sky.

MARIBEL EDWIN.

A ROBIN

FLAME-THROATED robin on the topmost bough
Of the leafless oak, what singest thou?
Hark! he telleth how—
"Spring is coming now; Spring is coming now.

"Now ruddy are the elm-tops against the blue sky,
The pale larch donneth her jewelry;

Red fir and black fir sigh,
And I am lamenting the year gone by.

"The bushes where I nested are all cut down,
They are felling the tall trees one by one,
And my mate is dead and gone,
In the winter she died and left me lone.

"She lay in the thicket where I fear to go;
For when the March winds, after the snow,
The leaves away did blow,
She was not there, and my heart is woe:

"And sad is my song, when I begin to sing,
As I sit in the sunshine this merry spring;
Like a withered leaf I cling
To the white oak-bough, while the wood doth ring.

"Spring is coming now, the sun again is gay;
Each day like a last spring's happy day."
Thus sang he; then from his spray
He saw me listening, and flew away.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

WHEN daffodils begin to peer,
With heigh! the doxy o'er the dale,
Why then comes in the sweet o' the year;
For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.

W. SHAKESPEARE.

A LAKE VILLAGE

A Story of Real People of Long Ago

KERRY and his little sister Anna went down to the landing-stage to play. It was pleasant by the water-side, and there was more room there than in the narrow alleys between the huts.

The village was built on a small island not far from the shore of a great lake. Long ago the people had settled there to be safe from their enemies. Year after year they had built more huts, until the island was quite filled up. But the landing-stage was wide, and a good place for play.

Anna did not want to run about. She sat down beside a post and nursed her doll.

Kerry watched a canoe that was coming towards the landing-stage. In it was a big boy called Osgy, whom he knew. The canoe belonged to Osgy's father, who used to carry things in it for people who had no canoe of their own. It was now loaded-up with baskets. In the fields across the water the people were gathering in their harvest, and sending over their corn and beans, and peas and wild fruits, nuts and crab-apples, to be stored up in the huts for food in winter.

Kerry's father had not a canoe of his own. He was a smith, and he worked all day long at his forge.

"Bring it back to me mended." (*See page* 80.)

But Kerry loved to be on the water. He went to help Osgy unload the baskets, and he was very glad when Osgy's father said he might have a trip with them to the shore and back.

On the shore the people had their fields where they grew their crops. There they had their sheep-folds and penfolds, and sheds for their cows, and goats, and pigs, with strong fences all round. Every day people were going to and fro across the lake to tend their live stock, milk their cows and goats, and drive the cattle out to feed.

Some of the villagers were fishermen who caught fish with nets in the lake. Some were fowlers who went out with their slings or bows and arrows to shoot wild ducks and cranes. Some went hunting red deer in the forests. But most people lived on the produce of their fields, and their flocks, and herds.

Kerry was helping to load up some more baskets of grain, when a man came hurrying from the fields, carrying in his hand a sickle broken in two. When he saw Kerry, he called out :

" Hi there, young son of the smith ! Take this to thy father, and beg him to mend it for me with all speed. Unlucky am I to break my reaping-hook at harvest time ! Bring it back to me mended, and see what I will give thee."

When they rowed back to the island, Kerry ran off at once to the forge as fast as he could go.

Kerry's father was a clever workman in bronze and iron. He made axes, and saws, and chisels for the carpenters, and bill-hooks, hoes, and sickles for the farmers, and brooches, rings, and ornaments for every one. He was always busy at his forge.

When Kerry took him the broken sickle he was not pleased. Just then he was beating out a thin plate of bronze to make a big cooking-pot, and he did not want to be bothered.

"Oh, the dunderhead!" he cried, "to use a good tool so ill, and send it now of all times. Mend it I cannot. Here, boy. Take him this one, and bid him have more care of it." He took a new sickle from the rack, handed it to Kerry, and told him to run away.

Osgy and his father were just pushing off, but Kerry jumped on board and they took him over again to the shore. He ran to the field and gave the farmer the new sickle. The farmer was very pleased. He opened a bag and gave Kerry a handful of ripe nuts.

Kerry cracked a nut and ate it. That made him think of dinner-time and home. Then he remembered that he had left little Anna all this time alone. And he had promised his mother to take care of her and see that she did not go near the water.

As fast as he could, he ran to the shore. Osgy and his father were still loading-up, but another man, who was just about to start, took him across.

He jumped ashore and ran along the landing-stage to look for Anna. Some children were playing by the water-side, but she was not with them.

He found her where he had left her, still sitting by the post. She held up her finger and said "*Sh-sh-sh.*" He was not to make a noise because her dolly was asleep.

So Kerry just whispered in her ear:

"We must go home now, Anna. It is dinner-time, and mother will be wanting us."

H. R. HALL.

THE EMPEROR'S TENT

A Story from History

ONCE the Emperor Charles of Spain,
With his swarthy, grave commanders,
I forget in what campaign,
Long besieged, in mud and rain,
Some old frontier town of Flanders.

Up and down the dreary camp,
In great boots of Spanish leather,
Striding with a measured tramp,
These Hidalgos,* dull and damp,
Cursed the Frenchmen, cursed the weather.

* Hidalgos were officers.

Thus as to and fro they went,
Over upland and through hollow,
Giving their impatience vent,
Perched upon the Emperor's tent,
In her nest, they spied a swallow.

Yes, it was a swallow's nest,
Built of clay and hair of horses,
Mane, or tail, or dragoon's crest,
Found on hedgerows east and west,
After skirmish of the forces.

Then an old Hidalgo said,
As he twirled his grey mustachio,
" Sure this swallow overhead
Thinks the Emperor's tent a shed,
And the Emperor but a Macho * ! "

Hearing his imperial name
Coupled with those words of malice,
Half in anger, half in shame,
Forth the great campaigner came
Slowly from his canvas palace.

" Let no hand the bird molest,"
Said he solemnly, " nor hurt her ! "

* *Macho* is Spanish for a mule.

Adding then, by way of jest,
" Golondrina * is my guest,
'Tis the wife of some deserter ! "

Swift as bowstring speeds a shaft,
Through the camp was spread the rumour,
And the soldiers, as they quaffed
Flemish beer at dinner, laughed
At the Emperor's pleasant humour.

So unharmed and unafraid
Sat the swallow still and brooded,
Till the constant cannonade
Through the walls a breach had made
And the siege was thus concluded.

Then the army, elsewhere bent,
Struck its tents as if disbanding,
Only not the Emperor's tent,
For he ordered, ere he went,
Very curtly, " Leave it standing ! "

So it stood there all alone,
Loosely flapping, torn and tattered,
Till the brood was fledged and flown,
Singing o'er those walls of stone
Which the cannon-shot had shattered.

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

* *Golondrina* is the Spanish name for a hen swallow; the cock being known as *Golondrino*, which in Spanish also means a deserter.

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN

An Old, Old Legend

ONCE upon a time a Dutch ship set sail from the East Indies to return to Holland. The Dutch had rich lands in the East Indies, and many a poor lad went out from Holland before the mast and landed at Java, it may be, and there settled himself and grew rich.

Such an one was a certain Diedrich, who had no father or mother living, and was left to shift for himself. And when he came to Java, he was bound out to a rich planter ; but he worked so hard, and was so faithful, that it was not long before he was free and his own master. Little by little he saved his money, and as he was very careful it was not many years before he was very rich indeed.

Now all these years Diedrich had never forgotten what a hard time he had had when he was a boy ; and at last, when he was a man grown and had his large fortune, he resolved to carry out a plan which he had made. He sold his lands and houses, which he owned in Java, and all his goods, and took the money he received in bags aboard a ship which was to return to Holland.

He was the only passenger on board, but he was

a friendly man, and soon he was on good terms with the captain and all the crew. One day, as the ship drew near the Cape of Good Hope, Diedrich was sitting by the captain, and they each fell to talking about their early life.

"And what," said Diedrich to the captain, "do you mean to do when you have saved up money enough not to need to go to sea any more?"

"I know well," said the captain, as he pulled away at his pipe. "There is a little house I know by a canal just outside of Amsterdam. I mean to buy that house; and I will have a summer-house in the garden, and there I will sit all day long smoking my pipe, while my wife sits by my side and knits, and the children play in the garden."

"Then you have children?"

"That I have," said the captain, and he went on to name them, and to tell how old each one was, and how bright they all were. It was good to hear him, for he was a simple man and cared for nothing so much as his wife and little ones.

"And what," at last the captain said to Diedrich, "what shall *you* do?"

"Ah, I have no wife or children, and there is no one in all Holland who will be glad to see me come home." Then he told of what a hard time he had had when he was a youngster, and at last, as the darkness grew deeper, and he sat there alone

with the captain, he suddenly told him his great plan.

"I have made a great deal of money," said he, "which, you know, I am carrying home with me. I will tell you what I am going to do with it. There are a great many poor children in Amsterdam who have no home. I am going to build a great house and live in it, and I am going to have the biggest family of any one in Amsterdam. I shall take the poorest and most miserable children in Amsterdam, and they shall be my sons and daughters."

"And you shall bring them out to my house,"

said the captain, " and your children and mine shall play together." So they talked and talked, until at last it was very late, and they went to their cabins for the night.

Now, while they were talking, the man at the wheel listened ; and, as he heard of the bags of gold that Diedrich was carrying home, his evil heart began to covet the gold. As he steered the ship, and after his turn was over, he thought and thought how he could get that gold. He knew it would be impossible for him alone to seize it, and so he whispered about it to one and another of the sailors.

The crew had been got together hastily. There was not one Dutchman among them, and there was not one of the crew who had not committed some crime. They were wicked men, and when the sailor told them of the gold that was on board, they were ready for anything.

The ship drew nearer the Cape of Good Hope, and the captain walked the deck with Diedrich, and they both talked of the Holland to which they were going, when suddenly they were seized from behind and tightly bound. At the same instant the officers of the ship, the mate and second mate, were seized ; and now the ship was in the hands of the mutinous crew.

These wicked men made short work. They

threw the captain and Diedrich and the two mates, each bound hand and foot, into the sea. "Dead men tell no tales," said the man at the wheel. Then they sailed for the nearest port. But as they sailed, a plague broke out on board. It was a plague which made the men crave water for their burning throats, and, as they fought to get at the water-casks, they spilled all the water they had.

There they were, in the midst of the salt sea, which only to look at made them wild with thirst. Though they feared what might befall them if they made for the land, they could not stand the raging thirst, and they steered for the nearest port.

But when they came into the port the people saw they had the plague, and they refused to let them land.

"We have a great store of gold," the crew cried with their parched mouths. "Only give us water!" But the people drove them away. It was the same when they went to the next port, and the next. They turned back, away from their homeward voyage, to the ports of the East.

Then a great storm arose, and they were driven far out to sea; and when the gale died down they steered again for the land. And when they drew near once more, another gale sprang up, and they were driven hither and thither. And once more they were swept far away from the shore.

That was years and years ago. But when ships make the Cape of Good Hope, and are rounding it, through the fog and darkness of the night they see a ghostly ship sailing, sailing, never reaching land, always beating up against the wind. Its sails are torn, the masts are bleached, and there are pale figures moving about on deck. Then the sailors whisper to one another :

" Look ! there is the Flying Dutchman ! "

HORACE E. SCUDDER.

JOHN WINTER

WHAT ails John Winter, that so oft
Silent he sits apart ?
The neighbours cast their looks on him ;
But deep he hides his heart.

In Deptford streets the houses small
Huddle forlorn together.
Whether the wind blow or be still,
'Tis soiled and sorry weather.

But over these dim roofs arise
Tall masts of ocean ships.
Whenever John Winter looked at them
The salt blew on his lips.

He cannot pace the street about,
  But they stand before his eyes !
The more he shuns them, the more proud
  And beautiful they rise.

He turns his head, but in his ear
  The steady Trade-Winds run,
And in his eye the endless waves
  Ride on into the sun.

His little child at evening said,
  " Now tell us, dad, a tale
Of naked men that shoot with bows,
  Tell of the spouting whale ! "

He told old tales, his eyes were bright,
His wife looked up to see,
And smiled on him ; but in the midst
He ended suddenly.

He bade his boys good-night, and kissed
And held them to his breast.
They wondered and were still, to feel
Their lips so fondly pressed.

He sat absorbed in silent gloom.
His wife lifted her head
From sewing, and stole up to him,
" What ails you, John ? " she said.

He spoke no word. A silent tear
Fell softly down her cheek.
She knelt beside him, and his hand
Was on her forehead meek.

But even as his tender touch
Her dumb distress consoled,
The mighty waves danced in his eyes
And through the silence rolled.

There fell a soft November night,
Restless with gusts that shook
The chimneys, and beat wildly down
The flames in the chimney nook.

John Winter lay beside his wife,
'Twas past the mid of night.
Softly he rose, and in dead hush
Stood stealthily upright.

Softly he came where slept his boys,
And kissed them in their bed;
One stretched his arms out in his sleep:
At that he turned his head.

And now he bent above his wife,
She slept a peace serene,
Her patient soul was in the peace
Of breathing slumber seen.

At last, he kissed one aching kiss,
Then shrank again in dread,
And from his own home guiltily
And like a thief he fled.

But now with darkness and the wind
He breathes a breath more free,
And walks with calmer steps, like one
Who goes with destiny.

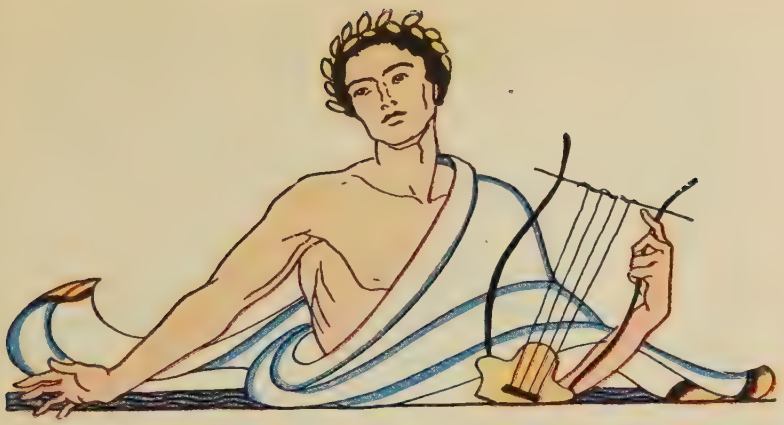
And see, before him, the great masts
Tower with all their spars
Black on the dimness, soaring bold
Among the mazy stars.

In stormy rushings through the air
  Wild scents the darkness filled,
And with a fierce forgetfulness
  His drinking nostril thrilled.

He hasted with quick feet, he hugged
  The wildness to his breast,
As one who goes the only way
  To set his heart at rest.

When morning glimmered, a great ship
  Dropt gliding down the shore.
John Winter coiled the anchor ropes
  Among his mates once more.

LAURENCE BINYON



ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

A Legend of Old Greece

I

In the pleasant valleys of a country which was called Thessaly there lived a man whose name was Orpheus. Every day he made soft music with his golden harp, and sang beautiful songs such as no one had ever heard before. And whenever Orpheus sang, then everything came to listen to him.

It was strange to watch the beasts that came and stood all round him. The cows came, and the sheep, and dogs, and horses, and with them came the bears and wolves; but they did not hurt the cows and sheep, for they forgot their old cruel ways as they heard the songs of Orpheus.

The high hills listened to him also, and the trees bowed down their heads to hear ; and I think that even the clouds sailed along more gently and brightly in the sky when he sang, and the stream which ran close to his feet made a softer noise, to show how glad his music made it.

And Orpheus had a wife who was called Eurydice, whom he loved very dearly. All through the winter when the snow was on the hills, and all through the summer when the sunshine made everything beautiful, Orpheus used to sing to her his pretty songs ; and Eurydice sat on the grass by his side, while the beasts came round to listen, and the trees bowed down their heads to hear him.

But one day when Eurydice was playing with some children on the bank of the river, she trod upon a snake in the long grass, and the snake bit her. And by-and-by she began to be very sick, and Eurydice knew that she must die. So she told the children to go to Orpheus (for he was far away) and say how sorry she was to leave him, and that she loved him always very dearly : and then Eurydice put her head down upon the soft grass, and fell asleep and died.

You cannot think how sad Orpheus was when the children came to tell him that Eurydice was dead. He felt so wretched that he never played upon his golden harp, and he never opened his lips to sing :

and the beasts that used to listen to him wondered why Orpheus sat all alone on the green bank where Eurydice used to sit with him, and why it was that he never made any more of his beautiful music.

All day long he sat there, and very often his cheeks were wet with his tears. And at last he said, "I cannot stay here any more; I must go and look for Eurydice. I cannot bear to be without her; and perhaps the king of the land where people go after they are dead will let her come back and live with me again."

II

So Orpheus took his harp in his hand, and went to look for Eurydice in the land which is far away, where the sun goes down into his golden cup before the night comes on. And he went on and on a very long way, and at last he came to a high and dark gateway. It was barred across with iron bars, and it was bolted and locked so that nobody could open it.

It was a wretched and gloomy place, because the sunshine never came there, and it was covered with clouds and mist. And in front of this great gateway there sat a monstrous dog, with three heads, and six eyes, and three tongues; and everything was dark

around, except his eyes, which shone like fire, and which saw every one that dared to come near.

Now when Orpheus came looking for Eurydice, the dog raised his three heads, and opened his three mouths, and gnashed his teeth at him, and roared terribly; but when Orpheus came nearer, the dog jumped up upon his feet and got himself ready to fly at him and tear him to pieces.

And what do you think that Orpheus did? Why, he said nothing; only he took down his harp and began to play upon its golden strings. And the dog Cerberus (for that was his name) growled and snarled and showed the great white teeth which were in his three mouths; but he could not help hearing the sweet music, and he wondered why it was that he did not wish any more to tear Orpheus in pieces.

Very soon the music made him quiet and still, and at last it lulled him to sleep; and you could only tell by his heavy breathing and snoring that there was any dog there.

So when Cerberus had gone to sleep, Orpheus passed by him and came up to the gate, and (was it not wonderful?) he found the gate wide open, for it had come open of its own accord while he was singing. And he was glad when he saw this, for he thought that now he should see Eurydice.

III

So Orpheus went on and on a long way, until he came to the palace of the king; and there were guards placed before the door who tried to keep him from going in, but Orpheus played upon his harp, and then they could not help letting him pass.

So he went into the great hall, where he saw the king and queen sitting on a throne; and as Orpheus came near, the king called out to him with a loud and terrible voice, "Who are you, and how dare you to come here? Do you not know that no one is allowed to come here till after they are dead? I will have you tied up with iron chains, and you shall be placed in a dungeon, from which you will never be able to get out."

And what do you think that Orpheus did? Why, he said nothing: but he took his golden harp in his hand, and began to sing more sweetly and gently than ever, because he knew that, if he liked to do so, the king could let him see Eurydice again.

And as he sang, the faces of the king and queen began to look almost glad, and their rage and anger went away, and they began to feel how much happier it must be to be gentle and loving than to be angry and cruel.

Then the king said, "O Orpheus, you have made me feel happy with your sweet music, although I

have never felt happy before ; and now tell me why you have come, because you must want something or other, for otherwise no one would come, before he was dead, to this sad and gloomy land of which I am the king."

Then Orpheus said, " O king, give me back my dear Eurydice, and let her go from this gloomy place and live with me on the bright earth again."

So the king said that she should go. And the king said to Orpheus, " I have given you what you wanted, because you sang so sweetly ; and when you go back to the earth from this place, your wife whom you love so dearly shall go up behind you : but remember that you must never look back until she has reached the earth, for if you do, Eurydice will be brought back here, and I shall not be able to give her to you again, even if you should sing more sweetly and gently than ever."

IV

Now Orpheus was longing to see Eurydice, and he hoped that the king would let him see her at once ; but when the king said that he must not try to see her till she had reached the earth, he was quite content, for he said, " Shall I not wait patiently a little while, that Eurydice may come and live with me again ?

So he promised the king that he would go up to the earth without stopping to look behind and see whether Eurydice was coming after him.

Then Orpheus went away from the palace of the king, and he passed through the dark gateway, and the dog Cerberus did not bark or growl, for he remembered the music which he had made, and he knew that Orpheus would not have been allowed to come back if the king had not wished it.

So Orpheus went on and on a long way ; and he became impatient, and longed more and more to see Eurydice. And at last he came near to the earth, and he saw just a little streak of light, where the sun was going to rise from the sea ; and presently the sky became brighter, and he saw everything before him so clearly that he could not help turning round to look at Eurydice.

But, ah ! she had not yet *quite* reached the earth, and so now he lost her again. He just saw something pale and white, which looked like his own dear wife, and he just heard a soft and gentle voice, which sounded like the voice of Eurydice, and then it all melted away.

And still he thought that he saw that pale white face, and heard that soft and gentle voice, which said, " O Orpheus, Orpheus, why did you look back ? How dearly I love you, and how glad I should have been to live with you again ; but now I must go

back, because you have broken your promise to the king, and I must not even kiss you, and say how much I love you."

And Orpheus sat down at the place where Eurydice was taken away from him; and he could not go on any farther, because he felt so miserable: there he stayed day after day, and his cheek became more pale, and his body weaker and weaker, till at last he knew that he must die.

And Orpheus was not sorry; for although he loved the bright earth, with all its flowers, and soft grass, and sunny streams, he knew that he could not be with Eurydice again until he had left it.

So at last he laid his head upon the earth, and fell asleep, and died: and then I think that he and Eurydice saw each other in the land which is far away, where the sun goes down at night into his golden cup, and were never parted again.

SIR G. W. COX.

CHERRY BLOSSOM LAND

A Travel Story

I

FAR away on the other side of the world lies the group of islands called Japan. Let us pay them a visit.

Until lately, there was only one way in which we could go to Japan, and that was by sea ; but now, if we choose and dare, we can fly.

No one in Japan would be surprised if we did so, for Japan is a most up-to-date country. After remaining unchanged for hundreds of years, all at once she awoke, as if from sleep ; and to-day she has her seaplanes and aeroplanes, her railways, street cars, and motor-cars, telegraphs, telephones, and wireless.

We, however, do not need either steamship or airship. We just spread the wings of our minds, and go in a moment to Japan.

We shall find that Japan is a land of danger and delight. The dangers have made her people calm and brave, while the beauty of their country has made them love beautiful things.

Their chief danger is from earthquake. Long ages ago, we are told, these islands were cast up by

some great movement underneath the ocean ; and, ever since, there have been earthquakes in Japan. One funny old story tells us that Japan rests on the back of a fish, and when he is tired and wishes to turn, an earthquake happens !

Only at times are the shocks severe, but almost every day, in one or other of the islands, some shaking of the earth is felt. For this reason the Japanese used to build all their houses in such a way that even if they fell they could not do much harm.

There are no less than fifty burning mountains in Japan. The snow-capped Fujiyama, the pride of Japan, was once a burning mountain ; its cone-shaped peak tells us so. Many streams of hot water pour down the mountain sides and through the glens. People in these parts can have a hot bath by simply stepping into the stream.

Lastly, great tidal waves may tear away parts of the coast, wrecking whole villages ; while fierce winds, sweeping down from the mountains, often do great damage. Yet, for all that, Japan is full of sunshine and joy ; and in springtime, when the fruit trees are in blossom—peach, cherry, apple, plum—it is like a scene in Fairyland. Spring, then, is the time of year in which to make our trip. We arrive when the snow has just gone, and the cherry trees are bursting into bloom.

First we peep at some of the towns. Nowadays, the main streets of a Japanese town differ little from our own ; but in the older parts the shops are open in front, and are like one long stall. Painted signs overhead tell us where one shop ends and another begins.

Besides motor-cars and vans, we see in the streets many strange, two-wheeled chairs called "jinrickshas." Between the shafts of each is a man. He pulls the wheeled chair along at a merry jog-trot. In it sits a Japanese lady or gentleman holding up a gay paper umbrella.

Other jinricksha-men are waiting for hire. When they see us they draw lots as to which shall have the chance of the fare. The lots are small cords. The man who draws the longest cord wins, and the others fall back. Then the lucky jinricksha-man helps us into his chair, and off we go to see the sights !

Pit-a-pat ! Pit-a-pat ! sound his wooden clogs on the road. He wears a round sun-hat made of straw. It is shaped rather like a soup-plate turned upside down. "Hai ! Hai !" he calls out to the crowd, which seems to mean, "Get out of my way !" and so they do !

We pass the gates of a High School. Many girls and boys are out in the playing-fields. Some of the boys are fencing and some are wrestling. Others are playing the English game of cricket.

P DEXTON

Not long ago a girl could only look on at such games, for her long kimono made her unable to run about freely. Nowadays, however, Japanese schoolgirls wear a uniform, and can play cricket or hockey, if they wish.

A schoolboy's uniform is always dark blue. He has a blue coat with wide sleeves, blue trousers, and a cap. A schoolgirl's dress may be any colour she likes. It has a jacket with a belt, and a wide skirt. This is not nearly so pretty as a kimono with its beautiful sash, but dressed in it O Hara San, which means Blossom, or O Yari San, which means Lily —can enjoy herself a great deal more !

II

After a time, we leave the towns and go out into the country.

Perhaps we go by train. The trains are very clean and up-to-date, and they are never late. The coaches have seats round the sides, and a passage up the middle. The Japanese passengers slip off their shoes in the passage, and then squat on the cushioned seats, with their feet tucked under them.

If they feel sleepy, they turn their backs to us, and pop off to the Land of Nod. As the train rushes on, they sway backwards and forwards, and we fear they will fall off their seats, but they never do !

Sometimes we drive in a motor-car from village to village. We pass along beautiful tree-lined roads. On every side the fields are carefully tilled. No inch of space is wasted ; for there are very many people in these islands of Japan, and much food must be grown to feed them.

The chief crops are rice and tea. There are also great plantations of mulberry trees, on whose leaves the silkworm is fed. Silk is much used in Japan, and is also sent off to other lands, so the silkworm is very important. He is called the " Honourable Little Gentleman," and must be treated politely, or he will not make good silk !

When we stop at a village inn, the inn-keeper comes out and bows very low, and so do we. But we cannot bow as low as he does, for his forehead touches the ground. Then he bids us enter. First, however, we take off our shoes and leave them outside, for no dirt must go into this spotless abode.

The house is raised on a wooden platform with steps. The inner walls are light bamboo frames on which oiled papers are stretched. They run on grooves and can be slid apart. The inn-keeper can thus have one big room, or a number of small ones, as he wishes.

The windows are made of rice paper, with a tiny peep-hole in the middle. In summer the whole front of the house opens up. A jar of plum blossom

stands in a corner of our room. On the wall is a picture which may be rolled up like a map. The floors are covered with matting, and there is very little furniture; for the Japanese sit, and eat, and sleep on the floor.

There is no fireplace in a Japanese home. The food is cooked and the kettle boiled on a charcoal stove called a fire-box, which may be carried about. In winter a paper house is very cold, and the people have to keep themselves warm by wearing padded clothes, and by drinking many cups of tea.

Soon our evening meal is served on a beautiful Japanese tray. We have bowls of rice, or it may be raw fish, or beans, and tiny cups of tea.

The inn-keeper's wife carries her baby in a sort of sling on her back. His legs are free and hang down behind. Here the "Treasure-flower" may sleep or wake as he pleases, while she goes about her work. His small sister toddles in and out after their mother. Her name is O Chu San, which means Butterfly, and she is very shy.

O Chu San's doll is strapped on her back. This is how she learns to mind a baby. Before very long we may see her playing skipping-rope or battledore and shuttlecock with the Treasure-flower on her back, and he will feel quite safe.

Now it is bedtime. Out of a cupboard the mother takes a pile of wadded quilts called "futons."

These she spreads on the floor. We have other futons as coverlets. Our pillow is very hard, it seems to be filled with sand.

Yet we sleep soundly, all the same, and dream of beautiful Japan!

MARIE BAYNE.

JAPANESE LULLABY

SLEEP, little pigeon, and fold your wings—
Little blue pigeon with velvet eyes;
Sleep to the singing of mother bird swinging—
Swinging the nest where her little one lies.

Away out yonder I see a star—
Silvery star with a tinkling song;
To the soft dew falling I hear it calling—
Calling and tinkling the night along.

In through the window a moonbeam comes—
Little gold moonbeam with misty wings;
All silently creeping, it asks, "Is he sleeping—
Sleeping and dreaming while mother sings?"

Up from the sea there floats the sob
Of the waves that are breaking upon the shore,
As though they were groaning in anguish, and moaning—
Bemoaning the ship that shall come in no more.

But sleep, little pigeon, and fold your wings,
Little blue pigeon with mournful eyes ;
Am I not singing ?—see, I am swinging—
Swinging the nest where my darling lies.

EUGENE FIELD.

THE STORY OF BENJAMIN

An Old Testament Tale

I

As you will remember, Joseph was bought from the merchants by an officer who had command over the soldiers of Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt; and after a time of trial he prospered so well that he became one of the chief officers of the king, having among other tasks the care of the royal granaries or storehouses of corn.

Now Joseph, who was very wise and thoughtful, caused great storehouses of brick to be set up in all the cities, and he told the people to place in these granaries one-tenth of the yield of each year's harvest. This he did to guard against any time of famine which might fall upon the land.

For seven years of plenty this was done, and after that there came upon the land, and upon all the lands round about, seven years of famine; and only in the land of Egypt was there corn for the people. And when the people cried to Pharaoh for bread he said, "Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do." Then Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold corn to the Egyptians. And from all the countries round about people came into Egypt to buy corn.

Far away in the Vale of Hebron the famine was sore, and the sons of Jacob, the father of Joseph, did not know what to do. Then when things were at their worst news came to Jacob that there was corn in Egypt. So he sent his ten sons away with their empty sacks and their asses to buy corn for their families. They wished to take their young brother Benjamin with them, but their father would not allow them. He had lost Joseph, he said, and he would not risk Benjamin with them.

Having crossed many a weary mile of yellow sand and barren rock, they were stopped by a high wall set with forts and gates guarded by soldiers ; and they had to say what they wanted before they were allowed to pass into Egypt.

For days they walked by the side of the great river Nile, along the road to Memphis, where the king's stores were, and at length they saw the city upon an island in the river. Stepping into broad ferry-boats with their animals, they were taken over, and went up the long road, lined on each side with the figures of winged lions in stone, towards the wide market-place of the great city. There they made known what they wanted, saying that they had come from Hebron to buy corn ; and their names and business were written down on a tablet, which was taken to the keeper of the granaries.

Word soon came that they must go before the

keeper ; and they were warned to be careful what they said, for he was one of the king's chief officers. Taking off their sandals and cloaks at the steps, the ten Hebrew shepherds went between the pillars at the door and stood waiting.

Within sat a young Egyptian, dressed in a robe of white linen, and wearing a great black wig of horsehair with many small plaits. His scribes sat at tables below him, writing down any orders he might wish to give.

An Egyptian soldier told the sons of Jacob to go forward. Then the ten men went in and knelt down humbly before the young Egyptian ; nor did they rise until he gave them leave. He looked at them and frowned, and they were afraid.

" Where do you come from ? " the officer asked sharply.

" From the land of Canaan, to buy corn," was the humble answer.

" You are spies ! " he cried in a passion. " You have come to spy out the weakness of the land. What is your calling ? Who are your friends ? "

The ten Hebrews could scarcely speak for terror. They had heard terrible stories of how these fierce Egyptians never allowed spies to get out of their country alive.

" No, my lord ; thy servants have come to buy food," said one. " We are all one man's sons,"

cried another. "We are honest men; thy servants are no spies," pleaded a third.

But the great Egyptian only listened with a frown to their whining voices. "No," he replied firmly; "you have come to spy out the weakness of Egypt. Is your father alive? Have you another brother?"

Why was this man so angry with them? they wondered.

"We belong to one family of twelve brothers," Judah replied. "We have a father, an old man, and another brother, the child of his old age, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him much. We are the sons of one man in Canaan, and truly the youngest is now with our father, and one other is dead."

Was he still angry? They lifted their dark eyes to the stern face of the young Egyptian.

"I see you are spies," was the harsh reply, but his voice was softer. "In this way I will prove you. By the king's life, you shall not go back unless your younger brother is brought here to me. Send one among you to bring him, and the rest of you shall be kept in prison until he returns. So shall I prove whether what you say is true. If you will not do this, then by the king's life you are spies indeed!" He waved them away with his hand, and the Egyptian soldiers pushed them out at the door, telling them that they must come away at once to prison.

As they sat on the earthen floor of the prison looking at each other in silence, they felt amazed and full of sorrow, thinking that they would never see their tents and their little ones again. For they did not know that the king's officer was their own

brother Joseph, and that instead of being angry, he was really filled with joy at seeing them after so many years of separation. As for his angry words, he was only trying them, and meant nothing but kindness, as we shall see.

II

Joseph's brothers were to be kept in prison until they settled who should ride back in haste to Hebron to bring Benjamin down into Egypt; but Joseph's heart was tender, and after a while he began to think that perhaps he had been too harsh with his brothers.

One man, he told himself, could not carry enough corn to feed all the starving families in Hebron, and it might be dangerous for him to ride back alone. His old father, too, would be anxious. So he sent word to the prison that the brothers might all go home but Simeon, who must stay in prison until the rest came back with their young brother.

He also gave orders that they were to have their corn sacks filled, and that each man's money was to be secretly tied up again in the mouth of his sack.

All the brothers were glad but Simeon, who begged them to come back as quickly as they could; and riding on their high camels, with their well-laden asses tied to each other in a long line, they left

the Egyptian city, thankful to get away, and went back to their old father in Hebron.

Jacob was glad to see them again, but he would not believe their story about Simeon being left behind ; and he refused to let them have Benjamin, for he said that Joseph was once taken and never came back, and that the same fate would befall the other son of his old age.

When they said that the Egyptian ruler had ordered them to bring their young brother down, their old father only asked, with flashing eyes, why they told the Egyptian that they had another brother. They replied quite truly that he asked them the question. Jacob did not believe them, and this made him all the more determined not to trust Benjamin with them.

But the corn which they had brought was soon finished, and the old man urged his sons to go back to Egypt for more. They refused to do so unless they could take Benjamin with them ; and after holding out for a long time, at last their father yielded. He bade them make up a little present of honey and dates and simple country things for the terrible Egyptian, hoping that the great man would not be unkind to his youngest son. Then with hands upraised he asked God's blessing upon his sons, and with a sorrowful heart saw them ride away.

Mounted on strong camels, and followed by a string of asses with the empty corn sacks on their backs, the ten brothers left the Vale of Hebron, and rode slowly across the hot desert to one of the gates of the great Egyptian wall. Again they came to the island, and were ferried over to the city as before.

The camels knelt in the wide market-place, where Joseph had been sold as a slave twenty years before, to wait while one of the brothers went to

tell the doorkeeper of Joseph's house that the ten shepherds of Canaan had returned with their youngest brother. After waiting for a time they were told that the king's officer would see them.

Joseph was glad when he heard that his brothers had come back again, and that they had brought his youngest brother with them. Pulling his black wig down over his brow to hide his pleasure, he ordered them to be brought in; and when they came and knelt before him, it was not on Judah or Reuben, but on the young man Benjamin, that he fixed his searching eyes.

His brother had grown so much that he hardly knew him for the little boy who used to run about the camp holding his hand as he took him to see the little lambs and the small black kids at play.

"Take these men to my house, for I shall dine with them to-day," was all Joseph said. The brothers were amazed when the meaning of the Egyptian words was made known to them. And when the gates of the courtyard closed behind them, they thought they were prisoners again, and sat down on the stone pavement to sigh and mourn.

But at noon there came a loud knocking at the gate, and the red and green chariot of the great Egyptian drove in, and soon they were summoned to stand before him. With their simple presents in their hands, they went through the garden and into

his beautiful house, and kneeling, laid the gifts at his feet.

"Is your father well?" the great man asked in a kindly voice. "The old man of whom you spoke—is he still alive?"

"Thy servant our father is alive and in good health," they answered humbly.

"Is this your younger brother, of whom you spoke?" he asked again, speaking as if he did not know one from another. Benjamin answered with a low bow; and Joseph said, "May God be gracious to thee, my son!" Then Benjamin looked up at him, and Joseph felt the tears coming into his eyes; and rising from his chair, to the surprise of the men, he left the hall. They did not know why he had done so. But if they had seen him in his own room weeping like a child for very joy, they would have been more astonished still.

The meal was served, and the ten brothers were surprised when the Egyptian ruler set them at a table all in the order of their ages; but even yet they did not know who he was. Joseph sat at a table by himself, with a beautiful silver wine-cup before him, and he sent plates of choice food to each of his brothers; but he sent to Benjamin five times as much as to any of the rest.

Next morning they were sent home with their asses laden with well-filled corn sacks. They were

very glad to get away so quickly, and they wondered as they went why the great Egyptian had been so kind to them. But even yet the thought that he might be none other than Joseph had not entered their minds.

III

Now Joseph had told his overseer that as he filled the brothers' corn sacks he was to put their money into them again, and also to take his own beautiful silver cup and put it into the mouth of Benjamin's sack. This was done for a purpose, as we shall see.

Next day, when the brothers had set out on their journey, the overseer was sent for by his young master, who ordered him to put horses into his chariot, to ride after the ten Hebrews, and to ask them why they had stolen his master's silver cup.

Cracking his whip as he went, the Egyptian drove along the road, and soon overtook the returning travellers. Checking his horses, he stepped out of his red chariot and sternly asked why they had returned evil for good by stealing his master's precious silver cup ; and he smiled when he saw the fear in the faces of the dusky Hebrews, and laughed when they all said they knew nothing of the cup.

He did not believe them, he said, and would

search for the cup himself; and he laughed again when they said he could search at once, and if he found it with any one of them, he could put that man to death and make all the rest of them the slaves of his master.

Of course the silver cup was found in Benjamin's sack; and pointing his finger at him, the Egyptian said that he would take him back to be his master's slave, but as for the rest of the men, they could go on their journey to their homes.

The brothers wrung their hands at these words, and their hearts sank within them. Judah had promised his father that he would bring Benjamin back again safe and sound, and now the lad was to become the slave of this terrible young ruler! After all, the man's kindness of the day before was only intended to make them feel the pain all the more when he seized their young brother to be his slave. They could not return to their old father without him. They would go back to the Egyptian city, they said, and all go to prison together rather than part with Benjamin.

In those days, when Hebrews were overcome with grief they tore their clothes, that all might see how sorrowful they were; and Judah was the first to seize his tunic and tear it down the front from neck to hem, and the others did the same. In a mournful procession they followed the Egyptian's chariot back to the city; and the people gazed at them as they passed, and laughed.

When they reached Joseph's house and entered the courtyard, they sent in a very humble message, begging that he would see them. And when they came into his presence they knelt before him, till their brows touched the coloured pavement.

"What is this that you have done?" he asked. "Do you not know that such a man as I can find out secret things?"

Joseph wished to frighten them, but in his heart he was glad that his brothers had not gone away, leaving Benjamin behind in slavery. They were kinder now than on that day so long ago when they sold him to the dark merchantmen in the far-off Vale of Dothan.

In a pleading voice Judah told the terrible Egyptian that all of them were now his slaves. But Joseph replied that he only wanted the man who stole his silver cup ; the rest could return to their father.

Then Judah had more to say. Holding up his hands for mercy, he told the story of how they had begged their old father to let Benjamin come ; adding that if they returned without him, the old man would die of grief. And to Joseph's surprise, he begged that he would let him stay behind and be his slave for ever in place of his young brother, and let Benjamin go home to his father.

At times while Judah was speaking Joseph looked at Benjamin, and sometimes he turned away his head lest they should see the tears in his eyes. And when his older brother offered to be his slave for ever, the young Egyptian suddenly ordered every one to leave the room but the Hebrews ; and he remained silent, with his head turned away, while his Egyptian friends and servants went slowly out.

As soon as they were all gone he sprang to his

feet, and held out his hands to his brothers, calling to them in Hebrew :

" I am Joseph ! Is my father indeed alive ? "

The men gazed at him in amazement. What would this terrible Egyptian do next ? Who was this who knew about their brother whom they had sold into slavery ? They were dumb with wonder.

" Come nearer to me, I beg of you," he pleaded. It was the voice of Joseph that rang in their ears. They came nearer, and gazed up at the great man. These cheeks were too ruddy for an Egyptian, and these brown eyes—were they not the eyes of Joseph ?

" I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt ! " he cried. They could no longer doubt that he spoke the truth to them ; and as they came forward he clasped them in his arms one by one, weeping for very joy. Then seeing in their eyes the deep sorrow for their past unkindness, he added :

" Be not grieved nor angry that you sold me into Egypt, for it was God who sent me hither to save many lives in the years of famine. I am lord of the king's palace and ruler of all Egypt."

Then he took his wondering brothers home with him to stay in his fine house, where his Egyptian wife and their little children lived ; and after a time he sent them away, laden with presents, and with wagons to bring down their children and their old

father Jacob into Egypt. For they were all to come down, he said, and live in the golden and fruitful land of Goshen, and he would watch over them there till the day of his death.

The Book of Genesis.

BRIGHT MORNING

THERE was a roaring in the wind all night ;
The rain came heavily and fell in floods ;
But now the sun is rising calm and bright :
The birds are singing in the distant woods ;
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods ;
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie chatters ;
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters.

All things that love the sun are out of doors ;
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth ;
The grass is bright with raindrops ;—on the moors
The hare is running races in her mirth ;
And with her feet she from the plashy earth
Raises a mist, that, glittering in the sun,
Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth run.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

CHRISTMAS

A BOY was born in Bethlehem
that knew the haunts of Galilee.
He wandered on Mount Lebanon,
and learned to love each forest tree.

But I was born at Marlborough,
and love the homely faces there ;
and for all other men besides
'tis little love I have to spare.

I should not mind to die for them,
my own dear downs, my comrades true.
But that great Heart of Bethlehem,
He died for men He never knew.

And yet, I think, at Golgotha,
as Jesus' eyes were closed in death,
they saw with love most passionate
the village street at Nazareth.

E. HILTON YOUNG.

H.M.S. *Iron Duke*, 1914.

NATURE WONDERS

Plant Galls

One of the wonderful things about insects is that many of them lay their eggs where the young ones they never see will find the right kind of food as soon as they hatch out. The common large white butterfly, which has not eaten a leaf since her own caterpillar days, goes back to the cabbages to lay her eggs, and so there is a meal ready for her family of caterpillars when they appear.

For some young insects the proper food is part of a plant, for others it is meat, or even the flesh of living creatures ; and sometimes the stories of these different insects' lives are so mixed up together that only one of them can have a happy ending. The wood-wasp lays her eggs in trees, and when the grubs hatch out they begin to tunnel into the wood. If there were many of these grubs they would do a great deal of harm, but luckily for the trees there is another insect on the look-out for the best spot to lay her eggs, and that spot happens to be the body of a wood-wasp grub !

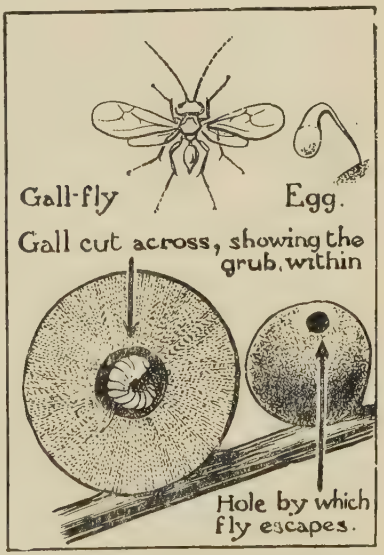
It is easy to see when a plant has too many insect visitors. Caterpillars often eat the whole of a leaf, except the hardest veins, and if the birds do not eat

enough caterpillars the gooseberry bushes in a garden may come to look very bare. Beetle grubs tunnel under the bark of trees and eat their way into the wood, sometimes spoiling it for timber. Young insects, called froghoppers, attack the leaves and stems of many plants and suck the sugary sap. Some of it they use for food, and some they whip up with a little wax from their own bodies to make the soapy froth, or "cuckoo-spit," that is so common in early summer. Among the bubbles the little froghoppers are cool and safe, for the sun does not melt the foam and birds do not like it on their beaks; and there they stay till their time of growing and casting their skins is over, and they are ready to change into winged insects.

In all these cases the plant simply puts up with the robbers, but in others it protects itself from damage by forming what are known as *galls*.

There are galls of various sizes, shapes, and colours, and though some of them spoil the beauty of the plants, many of them are as pretty as flowers

or fruits. The largest galls, the huge swellings on the trunks of oaks and elms, are not caused by animal invaders, but by lowly plants, called fungi ; and the strange bunches of twigs—the " witches' brooms " —that look like big birds' nests on bare birch trees may be due to a fungus too, though more often a " witch's broom " is a sign that the tree has been attacked by a kind of mite. But a gall is usually the result of the visit of an insect.



There are several hundreds of kinds of galls found on oak trees. One of the commonest is the oak-apple, which must not be confused with the acorn, the fruit of the tree. It is a spongy ball, creamy white at first, then pink, and later brownish-yellow ; and it is the nursery of a young gall-fly.

The mother gall-fly, an insect rather like a little wasp, alights on a bud of the tree, bores a tiny hole, lays an egg in it, seals the opening with a sticky drop, and flies away to another bud. The egg does not irritate the oak, but as soon as a hungry, wriggling grub hatches out

the tree begins to make a gall. Instead of unfolding in the usual way the bud grows very quickly into a fleshy oak-apple round the grub. Gall and grub grow together.

This does not hurt the grub. Inside the gall it finds the sappy food it needs, and it is protected from birds and other enemies. While it is at the feeding and growing stage the grub cannot wander and damage the rest of the tree, but when it is ready to change into a fly it is able to eat its way out. Galls are more like shelters than prisons. Some of them actually open to set free their "guests" at the proper time.

Other galls often seen on oak trees are the bright,

round cherry-galls, the flat spangle-galls on the under side of the leaves, and the smooth, woody marble-galls which remain on the twigs long after they are empty. In summer the marble-galls are green; in autumn they turn brown, and almost every one of them has a neat little hole that shows where the grub came out.

The beautiful mossy tufts, called bedeguar-galls or "robin's pin-cushions," on rose bushes are also caused by gall-flies. When the grubs hatch out of eggs laid in a leaf-bud, the plant sends out a great many fine red and green threads, instead of ordinary leaves, and later forms hard walls round the grubs in the heart of the pretty cluster.

In all these cases the young insects get the food they need, just as caterpillars do when they eat up leaves; but the plants that have the habit of making galls, and shutting the insects up inside them, are very little harmed by their visitors. An oak leaf may have more than one kind of gall on its surface and still be green and healthy.

MARIBEL EDWIN.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;
What is man, that thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Psalm viii.

A BABY'S ADVENTURE

A Story of Early Canada

In the early days of the West, a French-Canadian family, named Lajimodière, settled on the plains. Madame Lajimodière was the first white woman to live on the prairie.

One morning Madame Lajimodière hung a pail on her arm, and as she did so she spoke to her little daughter.

"I'm going to the river to fill the water-barrel, René," she said, "and you must look after your baby brother."

Little René was not much more than three years old, but she understood her mother's words quite well, and lisped, "René will sing to baby."

So René sang to the baby, and as she sang she rocked his cradle very gently. "Sleep, little brother, sleep," she sang, and at last the baby closed his blue eyes.

"Now I'll run down to the river to meet mamma," René said to herself. But before she reached the door it was opened by an Indian woman.

The woman did not look at René. She went at once to the cradle where the baby was sleeping. Before the little girl knew what was happening, the

Indian woman had snatched him up from his cosy bed and wrapped him in her blanket. Then she went quickly out.

The Indian woman was taking her baby brother away! René ran out of the cabin, and as she ran she cried, "Mamma! Mamma! A squaw came. She took baby away!"

When Madame Lajimodière heard the child calling, she dropped her pail, and hurried up the path that led from the river to the house.

"Quick, mamma, quick!" René called, and pointed down the trail.

"A squaw took baby!" she shouted.

In a second Madame Lajimodière was hurrying down the trail after the Indian woman.

"Give me my baby!" she cried as she ran; but the oftener she called, the faster the Indian woman ran.

After they had run for nearly a mile, the Indian woman became tired and began to walk. Madame Lajimodière was tired too, but when she saw that the Indian woman was walking, she ran even faster. At last she overtook her and caught her blanket.

"Give me my baby!" she panted.

The Indian woman turned and looked at Madame Lajimodière, and as she did so she held the baby tighter in her arms.

"My baby! You've stolen my little Jean," Madame Lajimodière cried.

The Indian woman shook Madame Lajimodière's hand from her blanket. She turned to run again, but she saw that there were tears in the mother's eyes and tears streaming down her cheeks.

The Indian woman's face became very sad, but she held out the baby to his mother. He was smiling and gurgling happily as the white woman began to run back to the cabin. For a few minutes the squaw stood watching her. At last she turned and went slowly down the trail.

Madame Lajimodière did not know the Indian woman's language, and the Indian woman did not

know madame's. It was not until her husband returned from taking his furs to Fort Garry that she learned why the Indian woman had wanted her baby. She had wanted him because she thought he was a baby angel. His eyes were so blue, and his hair was so golden, that the squaw was certain that, if she could carry him to her tribe, her people would always have good luck in their hunting and fishing.

JESSIE McEWEN.

A MIDSUMMER SONG

OH, father's gone to market town : he was up before
the day,
And Jamie's after robins, and the man is making hay,
And whistling down the hollow goes the boy that
minds the mill,
While mother from the kitchen door is calling with
a will,
"Polly! Polly! The cows are in the corn!
Oh, where's Polly?"

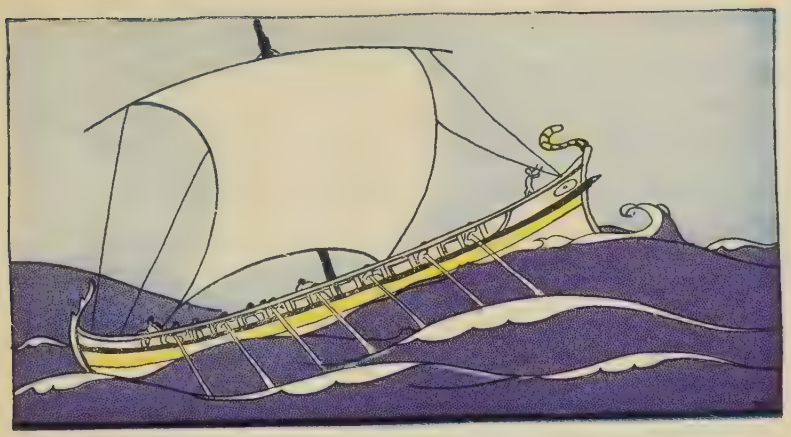
From all the misty morning air there comes a summer
sound,
A murmur as of waters, from skies, and trees, and
ground.
The birds they sing upon the wing, the pigeons bill
and coo ;

And over hill and hollow rings again the loud halloo:
"Polly! Polly! The cows are in the corn!
Oh, where's Polly?"

Above the trees the honey-bees swarm by with buzz and boom,
And in the field and garden a thousand blossoms bloom.
Within the farmer's meadow a brown-eyed daisy blows,
And down at the edge of the hollow a red and thorny rose.
But "Polly! Polly! The cows are in the corn!
Oh, where's Polly?"

How strange at such a time of day the mill should stop its clatter!
The farmer's wife is listening now, and wonders what's the matter.
Oh, wild the birds are singing in the wood and on the hill,
While whistling up the hollow goes the boy that minds the mill.
But "Polly! Polly! The cows are in the corn!
Oh, where's Polly?"

R. W. GILDER.



ODYSSEUS AND POLYPHEMUS

A Legend of Old Greece

I

THE war at Troy was over. The Greeks had burnt the great city of Priam, the king of the Trojans; and Odysseus and all the other princes of Greece set out in their ships to go home.

But the winds and storms carried them away to many lands. Only a few reached the countries which they had left to go to Troy; and these were tossed about for a long time on the sea, and went through great toil and many dangers.

At first the ships of Odysseus went on merrily with a fresh breeze; and the men thought that they would soon come to rocky Ithaca, where their homes

were. But Athena, the goddess of wisdom, was angry with Odysseus, and she asked Poseidon, the lord of the sea, to send a great storm and scatter his ships. So the wind arose, and the waters of the sea began to heave and swell, and the sky was black with clouds and rain. Many days and many nights the storm raged fiercely ; and when it was over, Odysseus could only see four or five of all the ships which had sailed with him from Troy.

The ships were drenched with the waves which had broken over them, and the men were wet and cold and tired ; and they were glad indeed when they saw an island far away. So they sat down on the benches, and took the great oars, and rowed the ships towards the shore : and as they came near, they saw that the island was very beautiful, with cliffs and rocks, and bays for ships to take shelter from the sea.

Then they rowed into one of these quiet bays where the water was always calm, and where there was no need to let down an anchor, or to tie the ship by ropes to the seashore, for the ship lay there quite still itself.

At the head of the bay a stream of fresh water trickled down from the cliffs, and ran close to the opening of a large cave ; and near the cave some willow trees drooped their branches over the stream, which ran down towards the sea.

So they made haste to go on shore ; and when they had landed, they saw fine large plains on which the corn might grow, but no one had taken the trouble to sow the seed ; and sloping hills for the grapes to ripen on the vines, but none were planted on them. And Odysseus thought that the people who lived there must be very strange, because they had no corn and no vines, and he could see no houses, but only sheep and goats feeding on the hillsides.

So he took his bow and arrows and shot many of the goats, and he and his men lay down on the ground and had a merry meal, and drank the rich red wine which they had brought with them from the ship. And when they had finished eating and drinking they fell asleep, and did not wake up till the morning showed its bright rosy light in the eastern sky.

Then Odysseus said that he would take some of his men and go to see who lived on the island, while the others remained in the ship close to the seashore.

So they set out, and at last they came to the mouth of a great big cave, where many sheep and goats were penned up in large folds ; but they could see no one in the cave or anywhere near it ; and they waited a long while, but no one came. So they lit a fire, and made themselves merry, as they ate the cheese and drank the milk which was stored up round the sides of the cave.

II

Presently they heard a great noise of heavy feet stamping on the ground, and they were so frightened that they ran inside the cave, and crouched down at the end of it.

Nearer and nearer came the Cyclops, and his tread almost made the earth shake. At last in he came, with many dry logs of wood on his back ; and in came all the sheep, which he milked every evening ; but the rams and the goats stayed outside.

But if Odysseus and his men were afraid when they saw Polyphemus the Cyclops come in, they were much more afraid when he took up a great stone, which was almost as big as the mouth of the cave, and set it up against it for a door.

Then the men whispered to Odysseus, and said, " Did we not beg and pray you not to come into the cave ? but you would not listen to us ; and now how are we to get out again ? why, two-and-twenty wagons would not be able to take away that huge stone from the mouth of the cave." But they were shut in now, and there was no use in thinking of their folly for coming in.

So there they lay, crouching in the corner of the cave, and trembling with fear lest Polyphemus should see them. But the Cyclops went on milking all the sheep, and then he put the milk into the bowls

round the sides of the cave, and lit the fire to cook his meal.

As the flame shot up from the burning wood to the roof of the cave, it showed him the forms of Odysseus and his companions, where they lay huddled together in the corner ; and he cried out to them with a loud voice, " Who are you that dare to come into the cave of Polyphemus ? are you come to rob me of my sheep, or my cheese and milk that I keep here ? "

Then Odysseus said, " Oh no, we are not come to do you any harm : we are Greeks who have been fighting at Troy to bring back Helen, whom Paris

stole away from Sparta. We are on our way home to Ithaca, but Poseidon sent a great storm, because Athena was angry with me; and almost all our ships have been sunk in the sea, or broken to pieces on the rocks."

When he had finished speaking, Polyphemus frowned savagely and said, "I know nothing of Paris or Helen;" and he seized two of the men for his dinner.

That day Polyphemus ate a huge meal, and drank several bowls full of milk; and after that he fell fast asleep. Then, as he lay there snoring in his heavy sleep, Odysseus thought how easy it would be to plunge his sword into his breast and kill him; and he was just going to do it when he thought of the great stone which Polyphemus had placed at the mouth of the cave; and he knew that if Polyphemus were killed no one else could move away the stone, and so they would all die shut up in that dismal place.

III

So the hours of the night went slowly on, but neither Odysseus nor his friends could sleep, for they thought of the men whom Polyphemus had eaten, and how they would very likely be eaten up themselves.

At last they could tell, from the dim light which came in between the top of the stone and the roof of the cave, that the morning was come: and soon Polyphemus awoke, and milked the sheep again; and when he had done this, he went to the end of the cave and took two more men and devoured them.

Then he took down the great stone from the mouth of the cave, and drove all the cattle out to graze on the soft grass on the hills; and Odysseus began to hope that they might be able to get away before Polyphemus came back. But the Cyclops was not so silly as to let them go, for as soon as the cattle were gone out, he took up the big stone again as easily as if it had been a little pebble, and put it up against the mouth of the cave; and there were Odysseus and his friends shut up again as fast as ever.

Then Odysseus began to think more and more how they were to get away, for if they stayed there they would soon be all killed, if Polyphemus went on eating four of them every day.

At last, near the sheepfold, he saw a club of Polyphemus, which Polyphemus was going to use as a walking-stick. It was the whole trunk of an olive tree, fresh and green, for he had only just cut it and left it to dry, that he might carry it about when it was fit for use.

There it lay like the mast of a ship, which twenty men could hardly have lifted ; and Odysseus cut off a bit from the end, as much as a man could carry, and told the men to bring it to a very sharp point ; and when they had done this he hardened it in the fire, and then hid it away till Polyphemus should come home.

By-and-by, when the sun was sinking down, they heard the terrible tramp of his feet, and felt the earth shake beneath his tread. Then the great stone was taken down from the mouth of the cave, and in he came, driving the sheep and goats and the great rams before him, for this time he let nothing stay outside. So he milked the sheep and the goats, as he had done the day before ; and then he killed two more men for his supper.

Then Odysseus went towards him with a bottle full of wine, and said, " Drink this wine, Polyphemus ; it will make your supper taste much nicer ; I have brought it to you, because I want you to do me some kindness in return." So the Cyclops stretched out his hand to take the wine, and he drank it off greedily and asked for more.

" Give me more of this honey-sweet wine," he said ; " surely no grapes on this earth could ever give such wine as this : tell me your name, for I should like to do you a kindness for giving me such wine as this."

Then Odysseus said, " O Cyclops, I hope you will not forget to give me what you have promised : my name is Nobody." And Polyphemus said, " Very well, I shall eat up Nobody last of all, when I have eaten up all his companions ; and this is the kindness which I mean to do for him."

But by this time he was so stupid with all that he had been eating and drinking that he could say no more, but fell on his back fast asleep ; and his heavy snoring sounded through the whole of the cave.

IV

Then Odysseus cried to his friends, " Now is the time ; come and help me, and we will punish this Cyclops for all that he has done."

So he took the piece of the olive tree which had been made sharp, and put it into the fire, till it almost burst into a flame ; and then he and two of his men went and stood over Polyphemus, and pushed the burning wood into his single great eye as hard and as far down as they could.

It was a terrible sight to see ; but the Cyclops was so stupid and heavy in sleep that at first he could scarcely stir ; but presently he gave a great groan, so that Odysseus and his people started back in a fright, and crouched down at the end of the cave :

and then the Cyclops put out his hand and drew the burning wood from his eye, and threw it from him in a rage, and roared out for help to his friends, who lived on the hills round about.

His roar was as deep and loud as the roar of twenty lions; and the other Cyclopés wondered when they heard him shouting out so loud, and they said, "What can be the matter with Polyphemus? we never heard him make such a noise before: let us go and see if he wants any help."

So they went to the cave, and stood outside the great stone which shut it in, listening to his terrible bellowings; and when they did not stop, they shouted to him, and asked him what was the matter.

"Why have you waked us up in the middle of the night with all this noise, when we were sleeping comfortably? is any one taking away your sheep and goats, or killing you by craft and force?"

And Polyphemus said, "Yes, my friends, Nobody is killing me by craft and force."

When the others heard this they were angry, and said, "Well, then, if nobody is killing you, why do you roar so? if you are ill, you must bear it as best you can, and ask our father Poseidon to make you well again;" and then they walked off to their beds, and left Polyphemus to make as much noise as he pleased.

It was of no use that he went on shouting: no

one came to him any more ; and Odysseus laughed because he had tricked him so cunningly by calling himself Nobody.

So Polyphemus got up at last, moaning and groaning with the dreadful pain, and he groped his way with his hands against the sides of the cave until he came to the door. Then he took down the great stone, and sat with his arms stretched out wide ; and he said to himself, " Now I shall be sure to catch them, for no one can get out without passing me."

But Odysseus was too clever for him yet ; for

he went quietly and fastened the great rams of Polyphemus together with long bands of willow. He tied them together by threes, and under the stomach of the middle one he tied one of his men, until he had fastened them all up safely.

Then he went and caught hold of the largest ram of all, and clung on with his hands to the thick wool underneath his stomach: and so they all waited in a great fright, lest after all the great giant might catch and kill them.

V

At last the pale light of the morning came into the eastern sky, and very soon the sheep and the goats began to go out of the cave. Then Polyphemus passed his hands over the backs of all the animals as they passed by, but he did not feel the willow bands, because their wool was long and thick, and he never thought that any one would be tied up underneath their stomachs.

Last of all came the great ram to which Odysseus was clinging: and when Polyphemus passed his hand over his back, he stroked him gently and said, "Well, old fellow, is there something the matter with you too, as there is with your master? You were always the first to go out of the cave, and

now to-day for the first time you are the last. I am sure that that horrible Nobody is at the bottom of all this. Ah, old ram, perhaps it is that you are sorry for your master, whose only eye Nobody has put out.

" I wish you could speak like a man, and tell me where he is. If I could but catch him, I would take care that he never got away again, and then I should have some comfort for all the evil which Nobody has done to me."

So he sent the ram on ; and when he had gone a little way from the cave, Odysseus got up from under the ram, and went and untied all his friends. And very glad they were to be free once more ; but they could not help crying when they thought of the men whom Polyphemus had killed.

But Odysseus told them to make haste and drive as many of the sheep and goats as they could to the ships. So they drove them down to the shore and hurried them into the ships, and began to row away : and soon they would have been out of the reach of the Cyclops, if Odysseus could only have held his tongue.

But he was so angry himself, that he thought he would like to make Polyphemus also still more angry ; so he shouted to him, and said, " Oh, cruel Cyclops, did you think that you would not be punished for eating up my friends ? Is this the way

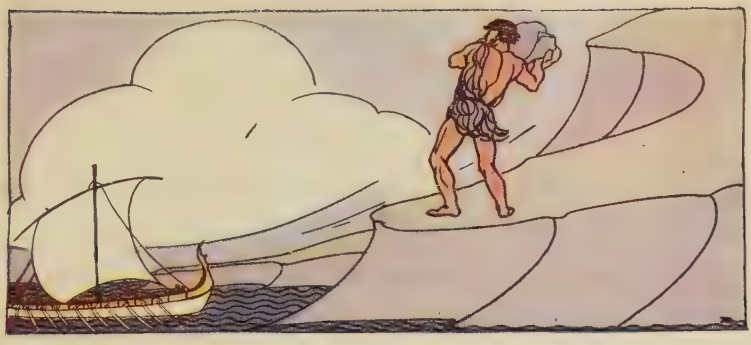
in which you receive strangers who have been tossed about by many storms upon the sea ? "

Then Polyphemus was more furious than ever, and he broke off a great rock from the mountain, and hurled it at Odysseus. On it came whizzing through the air, and fell just in front of his ship, and the water was dashed up all over it ; and there was a great heaving of the sea, which almost carried them back to the land.

Then they began to row again with all their might ; but still, when they had got about twice as far as they were before, Odysseus could not help shouting out a few more words to Polyphemus. So he said, " If any one asks you how you lost your one eye, remember, O Cyclops, to say that you were made blind by Odysseus, the plunderer of cities, who lives in Ithaca."

Terrible indeed was the fury of Polyphemus when he heard this, and he said, " Now I remember how a wise prophet used to tell me that a man would come here named Odysseus, who would put my eye out.

" But I thought he would have been some great strong man, almost as big as myself ; and this is a miserable little wretch, whom I could almost hold in my hand if I caught him. But stay, Odysseus, and I will show you how I thank you for your kindness, and I will ask my father Poseidon to send you



a pleasant storm to toss you about upon the dark sea."

Then Polyphemus took up a bigger rock than ever, and hurled it high into the air with all his might. But this time it fell just behind the ship of Odysseus : up rose the water and drenched Odysseus and all his people, and almost sunk the ship under the sea.

But it only sent them farther out of the reach of the Cyclops ; and though he hurled more rocks after them, they now fell far behind in the sea and did them no harm.

But even when they had rowed a long way, they could still see Polyphemus standing on the high cliff, and shaking his hands at them in rage and pain. But no one came to help him for all his shouting, because he had told his friends that Nobody was doing him any harm.

Sir G. W. Cox.

BUCEPHALUS

PHILIP of Macedon longed full sore
For a thorough-bred horse to ride to war.
" None of your knock-kneed hacks for me ;
I'm a very particular man," said he.

The groom he brought Bucephalus in,
And oh, the dust, and oh, the din !
Clattering rattle of bit and chain,
Battering hoofs and tossing mane.

Philip of Macedon stood in wonder,
Staring at all this dust and thunder.
" I'll wager there isn't a man," said he,
" Could stick on his back while I counted three."

Prince Alexander leapt on his back,
His spurs bit deep, and his whip went crack.
" Gallop," he cried, " now, faster ! faster ! "
Bucephalus *knew* that he'd found his master.

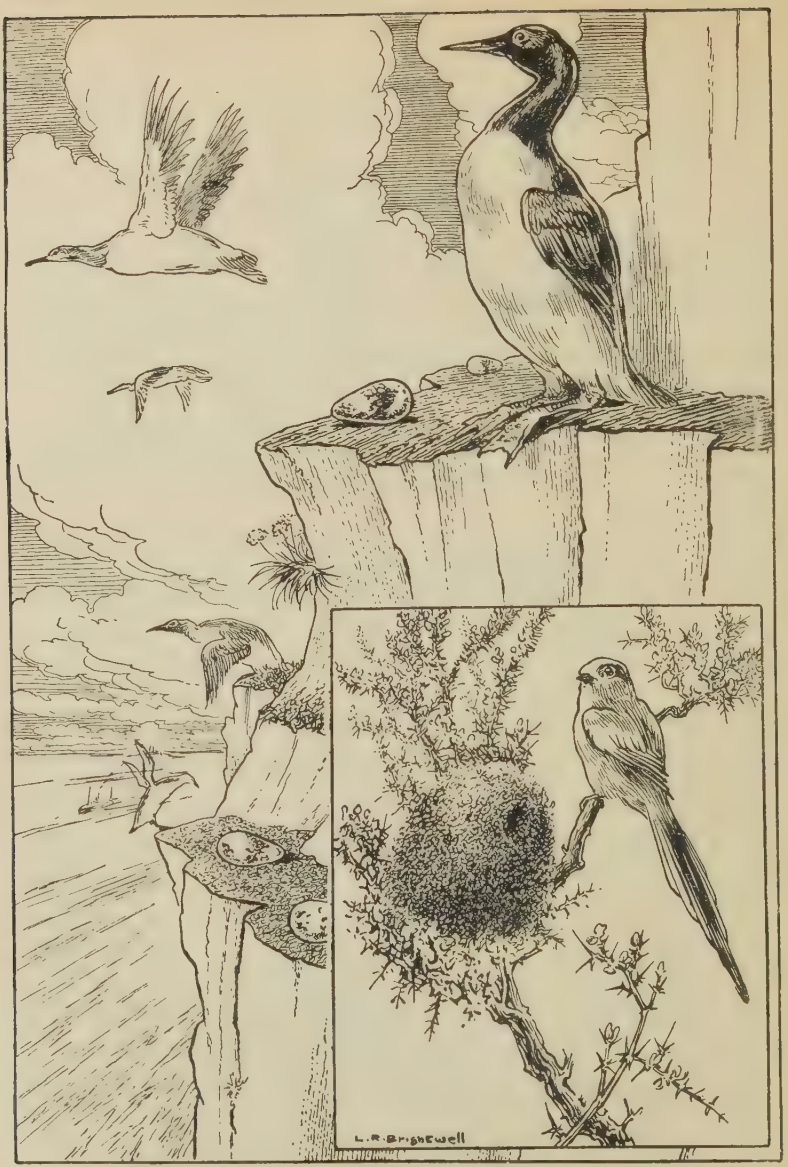
HUGH CHESTERMAN.

Birds' Nests

Nobody would call a whelk's shell a home, though it is as good as a house for the whelk that carries it on its back, and for the hermit-crab that finds it and tucks its soft body inside it after the whelk is dead. A home is something more than a shelter for one animal. It is a family dwelling-place.

A bird's nest comes much nearer to being a home than this shell, for, though the parent birds do not actually live in the nest, it is the centre of their family life. In it the eggs are laid and brooded over till the young birds hatch out; and after that it is a snug nursery, where the nestlings are constantly fed by the parents until they are strong enough to use their wings. Then they leave the nest, and neither they nor their parents come back to it any more. Birds never make winter houses for themselves, and it is only in rare cases that they have been known to take shelter in old nests. Wrens sometimes crowd together in cold weather in the deserted nest of one of the pairs of swallows that have gone to spend the winter in sunnier lands.

The simplest kind of nursery made by birds is not a nest at all. It is just a little hollow scraped in



Contrasted birds' homes: Guillemot on cliff edge; Long-tailed tit in furze bush.

the ground. This is safer than it sounds, for the terns, lapwings, pheasants, partridges, and other birds that do not make a real nest lay their eggs where they will not easily be seen. The colours of the eggs match the soil or stones or dry grass on which they lie, and the chicks have brownish or mottled coats of down, and are able to run about before they are a day old.

The solitary egg which the guillemot lays on the bare surface of a rocky ledge may be white or blue or green, or some other bright colour, but high up on the steep sea-cliff it is safe without a nest to hide it.

Ground nests are not all alike; even birds of the same kind build in slightly different ways. For example, all oyster-catchers lay their eggs on the ground, but some of them choose a hard bed among bare stones, while others line a hollow with grasses or seaweed. Another nest-lining material is used by many ducks—soft feathers from their own breasts. The mother eider-duck makes a quilt to draw over the eggs when she goes down to the sea for food, and if this down is stolen from her nest she will pluck herself a second time.

Several different types of ground nest may be seen beside an inland pond. The black-headed gull does not make a real nest, but lays her eggs on top of a tussock in the marsh. The dabchick goes

a step farther and collects leaves and rushes to make a platform which will float for some time without falling to pieces ; and a still firmer raft is built by the coot.

Many birds use holes as shelters for their eggs and young ones. A puffin often takes possession of a rabbit burrow ; a woodpecker will use a ready-made hole in a tree if it finds a good one ; and a kingfisher will make its bed of fish-bones in a sand-martin's deserted tunnel ; but all these birds can scoop out nesting-holes for themselves if necessary. The sand-martin is a small bird, with a short, feeble-looking bill, and yet it can dig a tunnel a yard long into a river bank or a cliff face.

Some of the birds that always nest in holes collect quantities of bedding, and some, like the nuthatch, which plasters up part of its doorway, are skilful builders, so there is not much difference between them and the makers of true nests, especially as some of these like to use nooks and crannies for extra protection.

The simplest nests built off the ground are rough stick nests, such as the wood-pigeon's loose platform, the lined nests of rook and crow and heron, and the magpie's with its fence of thorns. The most beautifully built nests are of two kinds, hard and soft ; and between these come such nests as the thrush's, which is made of grass or moss, lined with a mix-

ture of mud and wood-pulp that hardens into plaster.

One of the neatest of the hard nests is the house-martin's bowl-shaped nest of caked mud strengthened with straw or hair. The rim of the bowl is fixed to the wall under the eaves of a house, or against a cliff, and only a small entrance is left near the top. It takes the martin fully a fortnight to build its nest, for the mud must harden, and only about half an inch can be added in one day. When it is ready she brings feathers, caught in the air, for lining.

Moss, lichen, root-fibres, hair, and even spiders' webs are used in the making of soft nests, like those of chaffinch, tit, and wren, and all these materials help to keep the nestlings warm. To make them cosier still these closely-woven nests are often lined with feathers—there may be a pile of two thousand or more at the bottom of the long-tailed tit's pretty pocket !—and sometimes they are roofed in, too.

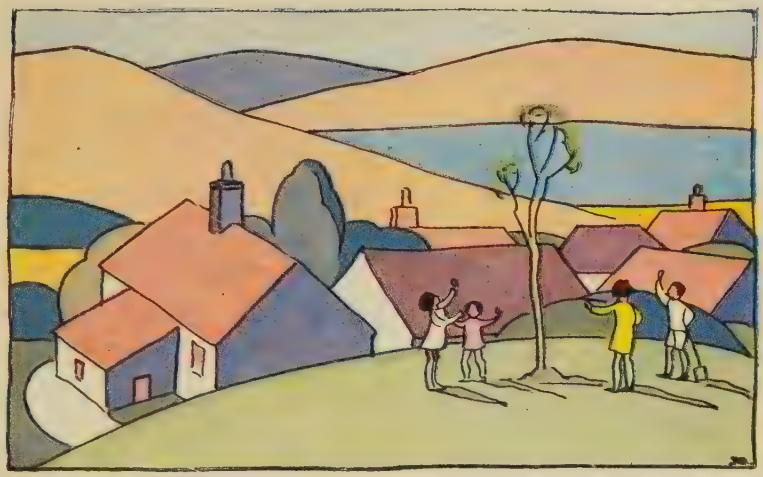
One thrush's nest is of the same pattern as that of every other thrush, and so with each kind of bird. Yet they are not always exactly alike, for sometimes a bird will add an unusual material, such as brightly coloured wool, as though it took pleasure in decorating its home. There is a story of a little warbler that lined its nest in the usual way with downy feathers, and then stuck a long, spotted guinea-fowl's feather straight up at each side ! MARIBEL EDWIN.

RAPTURES

SING for the sun your lyric, lark,
Of twice ten thousand notes ;
Sing for the moon, you nightingales,
Whose light is on your throats ;
Sing, sparrows, for the soft, warm rain
To wet your feathers through ;
And, when a rainbow's in the sky,
Sing you, cuckoo—" Cuckoo ! "

Sing for your five blue eggs, fond thrush,
By many a leaf concealed ;
You starlings, wrens, and blackbirds, sing
In every wood and field :
While I, who fail to give my love
Long raptures twice as fine,
Will for her beauty breathe this one—
A sigh, that's more divine.

WILLIAM H. DAVIES.



TWO ARBOUR DAY LETTERS

I. *New Zealand to Canada*

PRINCE OF WALES SCHOOL,
DUNEDIN, NEW ZEALAND,
January 26, 1932.

DEAR BILLY JOHNSON,

Friday was Arbour Day at our school, and I am writing to you to tell you what we did. I am writing for another reason too ; all the boys and girls in our class want to know if you have Arbour Day in Canada, and if you do, we want you to tell us, please, what you do on that day at your school.

We did ever so many things on our Arbour Day. We planted flowers, and made a hedge of nikau

palms, and laid out our class gardens. But the most important thing we did was to plant a tree. The tree is a kauri pine. Our teacher says you may use kauri varnish at your home. Do you? Perhaps some day you may use kauri varnish made from the gum of our tree.

In the northern part of our country there are great forests of kauri trees, but the tree we planted in our school lawn is one of the first to be in Dunedin. The principal of our school told us we should have to be very careful of it, or it might become homesick for the ferns and mountain flowers in the north, and die. But I don't think it will, for the big boys who planted it put its roots down very deep in the ground, and then we all had our turn at helping to pack the earth down very close about them. Every girl in the school poured a pail of water on the ground about its roots.

Then, when it was planted and watered, the principal and our teacher put a little wire guard about it. It looks very lonesome out there alone in the yard now, but in a few years, our teacher says, it will likely be a big strong tree, with long branches. It will grow to be over a hundred feet, perhaps. Do trees grow that high in Canada?

The thing we did on Arbour Day that was the most fun was to have a picnic. When you come to visit me in Dunedin, I'll take you to our ocean park.

You can go swimming in the ocean just as we did to-day, and we'll all play the most wonderful game of hide-and-seek in and out among the clumps of high ferns.

Our teacher said we were very noisy at the picnic. She said one would think it was a kakapo parliament. Do you know what that is? In case you don't, I'll tell you. Kakapos are birds that walk and do not fly, and often they flock together and chatter, and sing, and scream just like so many happy, noisy children.

It's time for us to go for our swimming lesson now, so I must say good-bye. Please don't forget to tell us about your Arbour Day.

Your very good friend,

JIMMIE WEBSTER.

II. *Canada to New Zealand*

ROCANVILLE, SASKATCHEWAN,
March 26, 1932.

DEAR JIMMIE WEBSTER,

Yes, indeed, we have Arbour Day in Canada, but we do not have it in January as you do. We couldn't have it then, you know, for the ground is covered with snow.

Our teacher says you never have snow in Dunedin. He says that if I tell you it makes the ground

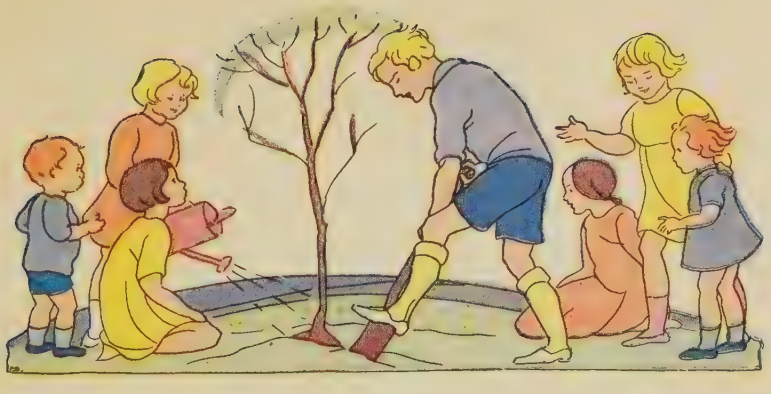
look like a white frosted cake, you'll have a good idea of what it is like. Do you think you'd like to have snow? When you come to visit me, we'll see who can throw snowballs farthest, you or I.

But I must tell you about our Arbour Day last year. We planted two Manitoba maple trees in our playground. You do not have maple trees in New Zealand, so when I write to you in the summer, I'll send some maple leaves with my letter.

The maple trees we planted were taken from a grove which my father set out near our house a few years ago. My father helped our teacher and the big boys to dig up the roots of the trees. After the trees had been planted and watered, all the boys and girls of the school sang "The Maple Leaf for Ever." Do you know that song? I think you'd like it. When you come to Canada you'll hear it sung very often.

Last year on Arbour Day we had a picnic after we had planted the trees. This year we are going to have a picnic too, but after we have planted our tree we are going to plant flowers. Perhaps we shall lay out a school garden, just as you did.

This year on Arbour Day we are not going to plant a Manitoba maple tree, but a cedar tree from British Columbia. In that part of Canada many of the trees grow very tall. Some of the firs there are over two hundred feet high. Our teacher's father in



British Columbia is going to send the cedar tree to us. We are all anxious to see it, for none of the pupils in our school has ever seen a cedar tree.

We shall have to be as careful of it as you are of your kauri pine, for cedar trees do not belong to the prairie. We hope that it will like its new home well enough to grow here. Our teacher says that it will stay green all the year round. Maple trees, you know, lose all their leaves every fall, and they do not get new ones until late in the spring.

Our fathers and mothers are coming to our Arbour Day picnic this year. We've asked them already, and they have said they will come. We're going to have great fun, too, for we'll have races and games, and a picnic tea on the school grounds. I'll write to you after it's over and tell you all about it.

Your Canadian friend,

BILLY JOHNSON.

THE WOODEN HORSE

You've read about the Wooden Horse,
The Wooden Horse of Troy,
And how the silly Trojans laughed
And clapped their hands for joy.
"A Wooden Horse; a Wonder Horse!"
They shouted. "It's a pity
That such a thing should stay outside;
Let's have it in the city."

The men of Troy were simple folk,
And simple folk, of course,
Would never guess that twenty men
Could hide inside a horse.
So, if you'll take advice from me,
You'll find it wiser far
When wooden horses come *your* way
To leave them where they are.

HUGH CHESTERMAN.

PRINCE RABBIT

A "Well I Never!" Story

ONCE upon a time there was a King who had no children. Sometimes he would say to the Queen, "If only we had a son!" and the Queen would answer, "If only we had!" And then on another day he would say, "If only we had a daughter!" and the Queen would sigh and answer, "Yes, even if we had a daughter, that would be something." But they had no children at all.

As the years went on, and there were still no children in the Royal Palace, the people began to ask each other who would be the next King to reign over them. And some said that perhaps it would be the Chancellor, which was a pity, as nobody liked him very much; and others said that there would be no King at all, but that everybody would be equal.

One day, when the Chancellor was in audience with the King, it seemed well to him to speak what was in the people's minds.

"Your Majesty," he said; and then stopped, wondering how best to put it.

"Well?" said the King.

"Have I your Majesty's permission to speak my mind?"

" So far ; yes," said the King.

Encouraged by this, the Chancellor resolved to put the matter plainly.

" In the event of your Majesty's death——" He coughed and began again. " If your Majesty ever *should* die," he said, " which in any case will not be for many years—if ever—as, I need hardly say, your Majesty's loyal subjects earnestly hope—I mean they hope it will be never. But assuming for the moment—making the sad assumption——"

" You said you wanted to speak your mind," interrupted the King. " Is this it ? "

" Yes, your Majesty."

" Then I don't think much of it."

" Thank you, your Majesty."

" What you are trying to say is, ' Who will be the next King ? ' "

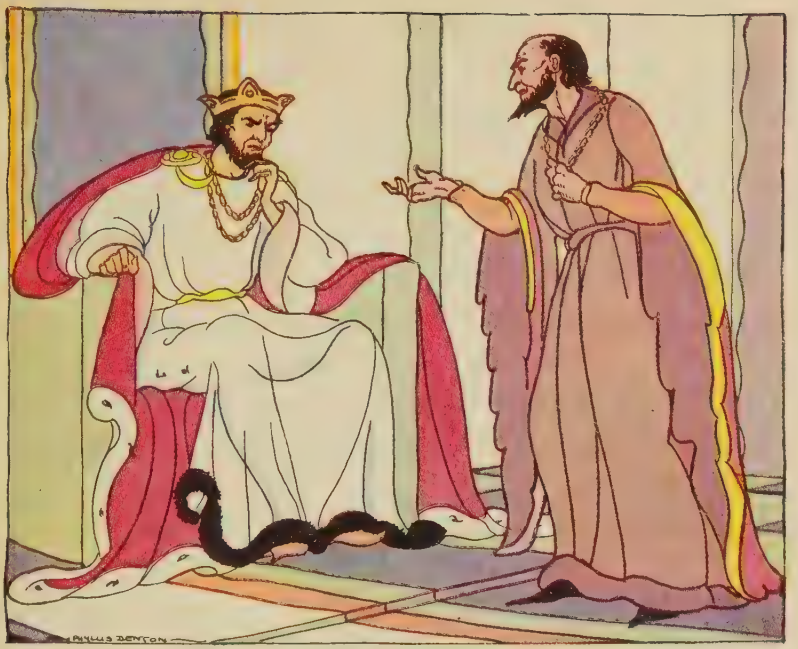
" Quite so, your Majesty."

" Ah ! " The King was silent for a little. Then he said, " I can tell you who won't be."

The Chancellor did not seek for information on this point, feeling that in the circumstances the answer was obvious.

" What do you suggest yourself ? "

" That your Majesty choose a successor from among the young and the highly born of the country, putting him to whatever test seems good to your Majesty."



The King pulled at his beard and frowned.

"There must be not one test, but many tests. Let all, who will, offer themselves, provided only that they are under the age of twenty and are well born. See to it."

He waved his hand in dismissal, and with an accuracy established by long practice the Chancellor retired backwards out of the Palace.

On the following morning, therefore, it was announced that all those who were ambitious to be appointed the King's successor, and who were of

high birth and not yet come to the age of twenty, should present themselves a week later for the tests to which His Majesty desired to put them, the first of which was to be a running race. Whereat the people rejoiced, for they wished to be ruled by one to whom they could look up, and running was much esteemed in that country.

On the appointed day the excitement was great. All along the course, which was once round the Castle, large crowds were massed, and at the finishing-point the King and Queen themselves were seated in a specially erected pavilion. And to this pavilion the competitors were brought to be introduced to their Majesties. There were nine young nobles, well built and handsome, and (it was thought) intelligent, who were competitors. And there was also one Rabbit.

The Chancellor had first noticed the Rabbit when he was lining up the competitors, pinning numbers on their backs so that the people should identify them, and giving them such instructions as seemed necessary to him. "Now, now, be off with you," he said. "Competitors only, this way." And he had made a motion of impatient dismissal with his foot.

"I *am* a competitor," said the Rabbit. "And I don't think it is usual," he added with dignity, "for the starter to kick one of the competitors just at the

beginning of an important foot-race. It looks like favouritism."

"*You* can't be a competitor," laughed all the young nobles.

"Why not? Read the rules."

The Chancellor, feeling rather hot suddenly, read the rules. The Rabbit was certainly under twenty; he had a pedigree which showed that he was of the highest birth; and——

"And," said the Rabbit, "I am ambitious to be appointed the King's successor. Those were all the conditions. Now let's get on with the race."

But first came the introduction to the King. One by one the competitors came up . . . and at the end——

"This," said the Chancellor, as airily as he could, "is Rabbit."

Rabbit bowed in the most graceful manner possible; first to the King and then to the Queen. But the King only stared at him. Then he turned to the Chancellor. "Well?"

The Chancellor shrugged his shoulders. "His entry does not appear to lack validity," he said.

"He means, your Majesty, that it is all right," explained Rabbit.

The King laughed suddenly. "Go on," he said. "We can always have a race for a new Chancellor afterwards."

So the race was started. And the young Lord Calomel was much cheered on coming in second; not only by their Majesties, but also by Rabbit, who had finished the course some time before, and was now lounging in the Royal Pavilion.

"A very good style, your Majesty," said Rabbit, turning to the King. "Altogether he seems to be a most promising youth."

"Most," said the King grimly. "So much so that I do not propose to trouble the rest of the competitors. The next test shall take place between you and him."

"Not racing again, please, your Majesty. That would hardly be fair to his lordship."

"No, not racing; fighting."

"Ah! What sort of fighting?"

"With swords," said the King.

"I am a little rusty with swords, but I daresay in a day or two——"

"It will be now," said the King.

"You mean, your Majesty, as soon as Lord Calomel has recovered his breath?"

The King answered nothing, but turned to his Chancellor.

"Tell the young Lord Calomel that in half an hour I desire him to fight with this Rabbit——"

"The young Lord Rabbit," murmured the other competitor to the Chancellor.

" To fight with him for my kingdom."

" *And* borrow me a sword, will you ? " said Rabbit. " Quite a small one. I don't want to hurt him."

So, half an hour later, on a level patch of grass in front of the pavilion, the fight began. It was a short but exciting struggle. Calomel, whirling his long sword in his strong right arm, dashed upon Rabbit, and Rabbit, carrying his short sword in his teeth, dodged between Calomel's legs and brought him toppling. And when it was seen that the young Lord rose from the ground with a broken arm, and that with the utmost gallantry he had now taken his sword in his left hand, the people cheered. And Rabbit, dropping his sword for a moment, cheered too ; and then he picked it up and got it entangled in his adversary's legs again, so that again the young Lord Calomel crashed to the ground, this time with a sprained ankle. And there he lay.

Rabbit trotted into the Royal Pavilion, and dropped his sword in the Chancellor's lap.

" Thank you so much," he said. " Have I won ? "

And the King frowned and pulled at his beard.

" There are other tests," he muttered.

But what were they to be ? It was plain that Lord Calomel was in no condition for another physical test. What, then, of an intellectual test ?

" After all," said the King to the Queen that night, " intelligence is a quality not without value to a ruler."

" Is it ? " asked the Queen doubtfully.

" I have found it so," said the King, a trifle haughtily.

" Oh," said the Queen.

" There is a riddle, of which my father was fond, the answer to which has never been revealed save to the Royal House. We might make this the final test between them."

" What is the riddle ? "

" I fancy it goes like this." He thought for a moment, and then recited it, beating time with his hand.

" My *first* I do for your delight,
Although 'tis neither black nor white.
My *second* looks the other way,
Yet always goes to bed by day.
My *whole* can fly, and climb a tree,
And sometimes swims upon the sea."

" What is the answer ? " asked the Queen.

" As far as I remember," said His Majesty, " it is either *Dormouse* or *Raspberry*."

" ' Dormouse ' doesn't make sense," objected the Queen.

" Neither does ' raspberry,' " pointed out the King.

" Then how can they guess it ? "

"They can't. But my idea is that young Calomel should be secretly told beforehand what the answer is, so that he may win the competition."

"Is that fair?" asked the Queen doubtfully.

"Yes," said the King. "Certainly. Or I wouldn't have suggested it."

So it was duly announced by the Chancellor that the final test between the young Lord Calomel and Rabbit would be the solving of an ancient riddle-me-ree, which in the past had baffled all save those of Royal blood. Copies of the riddle had been sent to the competitors, and in a week from that day they would be called upon to give their answers before their Majesties and the full Court. And with Lord Calomel's copy went a message, which said this:

"*From a Friend.* The answer is *Dormouse.* BURN THIS."

The day came round; and Calomel and Rabbit were brought before their Majesties; and they bowed to their Majesties, and were ordered to be seated, for Calomel's ankle was still painful to him. And when the Chancellor had called for silence, the King addressed those present, explaining the conditions of the test to them.

"And the answer to the riddle," he said, "is in this sealed paper, which I now hand to my Chancellor, in order that he shall open it, as soon as the

competitors have told us what they know of the matter."

The people, being uncertain what else to do, cheered slightly.

"I will ask Lord Calomel first," His Majesty went on. He looked at his lordship, and his lordship nodded slightly. And Rabbit, noticing that nod, smiled suddenly to himself.

"Lord Calomel," said the King, "what do you consider to be the best answer to this riddle-me-ree?"

The young Lord Calomel tried to look very wise, and he said:

"There are many possible answers to this riddle-me-ree, but the best answer seems to me to be *Dormouse.*"

"Let some one take a note of that answer," said the King; whereupon the Chief Secretary wrote down: "LORD CALOMEL—*Dormouse.*"

"Now," said the King to Rabbit, "what suggestion have you to make in this matter?"

Rabbit, who had spent an anxious week inventing answers each more impossible than the last, looked down modestly.

"Well?" said the King.

"Your Majesty," said Rabbit with some apparent hesitation, "I have a great respect for the intelligence of the young Lord Calomel, but I think

that in this matter he is mistaken. The answer is not, as he suggests, *wood-louse*, but *dormouse*."

" I *said* dormouse," cried Calomel indignantly.

" I thought you said ' wood-louse,' " said Rabbit in surprise.

" He certainly said ' dormouse,' " said the King coldly.

" ' Wood-louse,' I *think*," said Rabbit.

" Lord Calomel—*Dormouse*," read out the Chief Secretary.

"There you are," said Calomel. "I did say 'dormouse.'"

"My apologies," said Rabbit, with a bow. "Then we are both right, for *dormouse* it certainly is."

The Chancellor broke open the sealed paper, and to the amazement of nearly all present read out, "Dormouse."

"Apparently, your Majesty," he said in some surprise, "they are both equally correct."

The King scowled. In some way, which he didn't quite understand, he had been tricked.

"May I suggest, your Majesty," the Chancellor went on, "that they be asked now some question of a different order, such as can be answered, after not more than a few minutes' thought, here in your Majesty's presence. Some problem in mathematics, for instance, such as might be profitable for a future King to know."

"What question?" asked His Majesty, a little nervously.

"Well, as an example—what is seven times six?" And, behind his hand, he whispered to the King, "Forty-two."

Not a muscle of the King's face moved, but he looked thoughtfully at the Lord Calomel. Supposing his lordship did not know!

"Well?" he said reluctantly. "What is the answer?"

The young Lord Calomel thought for some time, and then said, " Fifty-four."

" And you ? " said the King to Rabbit.

Rabbit wondered what to say. As long as he gave the same answers as Calomel, he could not lose in the encounter, yet in this case " forty-two " was the right answer. But the King, who could do no wrong, even in arithmetic, might decide, for the purpose of the competition, that " fifty-four " was an answer more becoming to the future ruler of the country. Was it, then, safe to say, " Forty-two " ?

" Your Majesty," he said, " there are several possible answers to this extraordinarily novel conundrum. At first sight the obvious solution would appear to be ' forty-two.' The objection to this solution is that it lacks originality. I have long felt that a progressive country such as ours might well strike out a new line in the matter. Let us agree that in future seven sixes are fifty-four. In that case the answer, as Lord Calomel has pointed out, *is* ' fifty-four.' But if your Majesty would prefer to cling to the old style of counting, then your Majesty and your Majesty's Chancellor would make the answer ' forty-two.' "

After saying which, Rabbit bowed gracefully, both to their Majesties and to his opponent, and sat down again.

The King scratched his head in a puzzled sort of way.

" The correct answer," he said, " is, or will be in the future, ' fifty-four.' "

" Make a note of that," whispered the Chancellor to the Chief Secretary.

" Lord Calomel guessed this at his first attempt ; Rabbit at his second attempt. I therefore declare Lord Calomel the winner."

" Shame ! " said Rabbit.

" Who said that ? " cried the King furiously.

Rabbit looked over his shoulder, with the object of identifying the culprit, but was apparently unsuccessful.

" However," went on the King, " in order that there should be no doubt in the minds of my people as to the absolute fairness with which this competition is being conducted, there will be one further test. It happens that a King is often called upon to make speeches and exhortations to his people, and for this purpose the ability to stand evenly upon two legs for a considerable length of time is of much value to him. The next test, therefore, will be——"

But at this point Lord Calomel cleared his throat so loudly that the King had to stop and listen to him.

" Quite so," said the King. " The next test,

therefore, will be held in a month's time, when his lordship's ankle is healed, and it will be a test to see who can balance himself longest upon two legs only."

Rabbit lolloped back to his home in the wood, pondering deeply.

Now there was an enchanter who lived in the wood, a man of many magical gifts. He could (it was averred by the countryside) extract coloured ribbons from his mouth, cook plum-puddings in a hat, and produce as many as ten silk handkerchiefs, knotted together, from a twist of paper. And that

night, after a simple dinner of salad, Rabbit called upon him.

"Can you," he said, "turn a rabbit into a man?"

The enchanter considered this carefully.

"I can," he said at last, "turn a plum-pudding into a rabbit."

"That," said Rabbit, "to be quite frank, would not be a helpful operation."

"I can turn almost anything into a rabbit," said the enchanter with growing enthusiasm. "In fact, I like doing it."

Then Rabbit had an idea.

"Can you turn a man into a rabbit?"

"I did once. At least I turned a baby into a baby rabbit."

"When was that?"

"Eighteen years ago. At the court of King Nicodemus. I was giving an exhibition of my powers to him and his good Queen. I asked one of the company to lend me a baby, never thinking for a moment that—— The young Prince was handed up. I put a red silk handkerchief over him, and waved my hands. Then I took the handkerchief away. . . . The Queen was very much distressed. I tried everything I could, but it was useless. The King was most generous about it. He said that I could keep the rabbit. I carried it about with me

for some weeks, but one day it escaped. Dear, dear!" He wiped his eyes gently with a red silk handkerchief.

"Most interesting," said Rabbit. "Well, this is what I want you to do." And they discussed the matter from the beginning.

A month later the great Standing Competition was to take place. When all was ready, the King rose to make his opening remarks.

"We are now," he began, "to make one of the most interesting tests between our two candidates for the throne. At the word 'Go!' they will——" And then he stopped suddenly. "Why, what's this?" he said, putting on his spectacles. "Where is the young Lord Calomel? And what is that second rabbit doing? There was no need to bring your brother," he added severely to Rabbit.

"I am Lord Calomel," said the second rabbit meekly.

"Oh!" said the King.

"Go!" said the Chancellor, who was a little deaf.

Rabbit, who had been practising for a month, jumped on his back paws and remained there. Lord Calomel, who had had no practice at all, remained on all fours. In the crowd at the back the enchanter chuckled to himself.

"How long do I stay like this?" asked Rabbit.

" This is all very awkward and distressing," said the King.

" May I get down ? " said Rabbit.

" There is no doubt that the Rabbit has won," said the Chancellor.

" Which rabbit ? " cried the King crossly. " They're both rabbits."

" The one with the white spots behind the ears," said Rabbit helpfully. " May I get down ? "

There was a sudden cry from the back of the hall.

" Your Majesty ? "

" Well, well, what is it ? "

The enchanter pushed his way forward.

" May I look, your Majesty ? " he said in a trembling voice. " White spots behind the ears ? Dear, dear ! Allow me ! " He seized Rabbit's ears, and bent them this way and that.

" Ow ! " said Rabbit.

" It is ! Your Majesty, it is ! "

" Is what ? "

" Is what ? "

" The son of the late King Nicodemus, whose country is now joined to your own. Prince Silvio."

" Quite so," said Rabbit airily, hiding his surprise. " Didn't any of you recognize me ? "

" Nicodemus only had one son," said the Chancellor, " and he died as a baby."

" Not died," said the enchanter, and forthwith explained the whole sad story.

" I see," said the King, when the story was ended. " But of course that is neither here nor there. A competition like this must be conducted with absolute impartiality." He turned to the Chancellor. " Which of them won that last test ? "

" Prince Silvio," said the Chancellor.

" Then, my dear Prince Silvio——"

" One moment," interrupted the enchanter excitedly. " I've just thought of the words. I *knew* there were some words you had to say."

He threw his red silk handkerchief over Rabbit, and cried, " Hey presto ! "

And the handkerchief rose and rose and rose. . . .

And there was Prince Silvio !

You can imagine how loudly the people cheered. But the King appeared not to notice that anything surprising had happened.

" Then, my dear Prince Silvio," he went on, " as the winner of this most interesting series of contests, you are appointed successor to our throne."

" Your Majesty," said Silvio, " this is too much." And he turned to the enchanter and said, " May I borrow your handkerchief for a moment ? My emotion has overcome me."

So on the following day, Prince Rabbit was duly proclaimed heir to the throne before all the people.

But not until the ceremony was over did he return the enchanter's red handkerchief.

"And now," he said to the enchanter, "you may restore Lord Calomel to his proper shape."

And the enchanter placed his handkerchief on Lord Calomel's head, and said, "Hey presto!" And Lord Calomel stretched himself and said, "Thanks very much." But he said it rather coldly, as if he were not really very grateful.

So they all lived happily for a long time. And Prince Rabbit married the most beautiful Princess of those parts; and when a son was born to them there was much feasting and jollification. And the King gave a great party, whereat minstrels, tumblers, jugglers, and suchlike were present in large quantities to give pleasure to the company. But in spite of a suggestion made by the Princess, the enchanter was not present.

"But I hear he is so clever," said the Princess to her husband.

"He has many amusing inventions," replied the Prince, "but some of them are not in the best of taste."

"Very well, dear," said the Princess.

A. A. Milne.

PEASANTS' HUNTING SONG

Up, up ! ye dames, and lasses gay !
To the meadows trip away.
'Tis you must tend the flocks this morn,
And scare the small birds from the corn.
Not a soul at home may stay :
For the shepherds must go
With lance and bow
To hunt the wolf in the woods to-day.

Leave the hearth and leave the house
To the cricket and the mouse :
Find grandam out a sunny seat,
With babe and lambkin at her feet.
Not a soul at home may stay :
For the shepherds must go
With lance and bow.
To hunt the wolf in the woods to-day.

S. T. Coleridge.

TWO SCHOOLBOYS OF MALAYA

A Travel Story

I

We all know the meaning of "betwixt and between." We might use these words about autumn, which is neither summer nor winter, or about dawn or twilight, when we have neither darkness nor light.

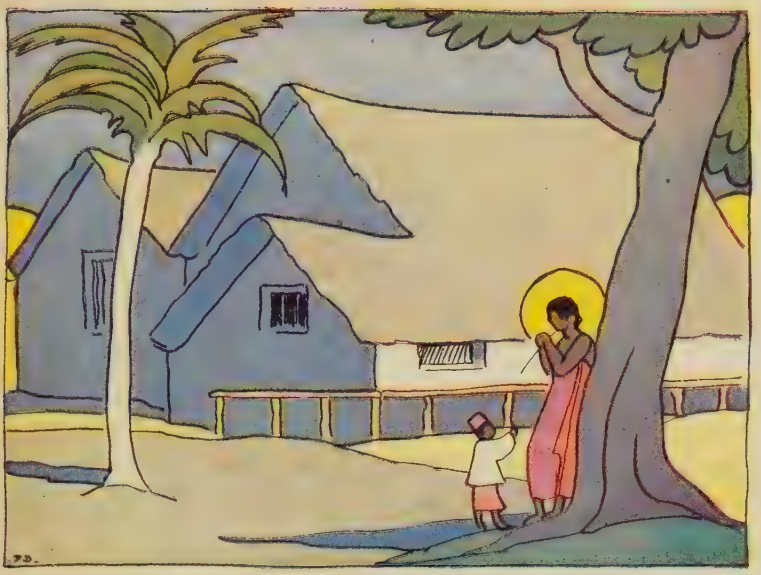
There are parts of the world which are "betwixt and between." The people in these parts are laying aside the old ways, having learned new ways from strangers. They like the new ways, and yet they cling to the old. Thus they are "betwixt and between."

One such country is Malaya, a tongue of land to the south of Asia, lying between the Indian Ocean and the China Sea.

The river Perak flows through Western Malaya, the district around it being called Perak. It is one of four districts, all part of the British Empire.

Yet it is not so long since white men first came to Malaya; and, until then, this land of the palm and the peacock, the tiger, the elephant, and the crocodile, had remained hidden and unchanged for hundreds of years.

Much of the life which we see in Malaya to-day has, therefore, been brought about in a short time.



For example, the three great ports of Malaya—Singapore, Penang, and Malacca—are now crowded and up-to-date cities. But, strange to say, the crowds are Chinese, rather than Malayan. There are as many Chinese rickshaws as there are motor-cars in the streets; and, down at the docks, Chinese "sampans" or boats carry passengers out to the big ships.

There are also busy tin mines and vast rubber estates in Malaya, but the workers on these are Indians or Chinese. Nearly all the shopkeepers in Malaya are Chinese, and so are the "dhobis" or washermen, who carry on laundries.

The truth is that Malayans do not care for city life, nor do they think it worth while to toil all day long in order to make money. At heart they are a nation of farmers and fishermen. They believe in a little work and a little play. They like laughter, and good manners, and plenty of sport; so it is no wonder if they are sometimes at a loss to know which is best—the old ways or the new.

This is just how the two boys feel, about whom you are going to read.

Both these boys live on the banks of the Perak River. One is high-born. He is the son of a Raja, whose forefathers were once rulers in Perak. The other is the son of a rice farmer who lives in a "kampong" or village close to the jungle. Both are twelve years of age.

The name of the high-born lad is Si Hamed. He has already been at a good day-school, and speaks English well. To-morrow his father is sending him to the Malay College in Kuala* Kangsar, the chief city of Perak. It is a boarding school, and Si Hamed will be there for six years. He wonders how he will like it.

His mother does not like it at all. She would much rather keep her son at home in their palace by the river.

The ladies of Malaya dislike changes. They are

* Pronounced K*w*ala.

often very beautiful, and always very shy. They wear lovely jewels and silken clothes, but their faces are veiled, and, even yet, very few of them have been at school. So Si Hamed's mother wishes to keep her son at home.

But his father is not of the same mind. He says Si Hamed must learn all he can, so that, by-and-by, he may pass a good examination, and perhaps gain a post in the Civil Service. Then he would take part in ruling his country, as his forefathers have done.

Si Hamed does not quite know which to believe. He is " betwixt and between."

The name of the farmer's son is Kassim. Their home is larger than the other houses in the kampong, and is built on a low hill. In front, the rice or " paddy " fields slope downwards to the river.

The house is raised from the ground on posts. It is made of bamboo, and is thatched with palm leaf. The roof is steep, and curves upward to a graceful point.

Tall coco-nut and sago palms and clumps of feathery bamboos cluster around the village, making it cool and shady even at noon. But out over the paddy fields the sun's rays beat fiercely all day long.

Kassim wonders if *he* should be a farmer too. Sometimes he feels he would rather be a postman,

like his elder brother in Singapore, or a policeman, like his second brother in Penang.

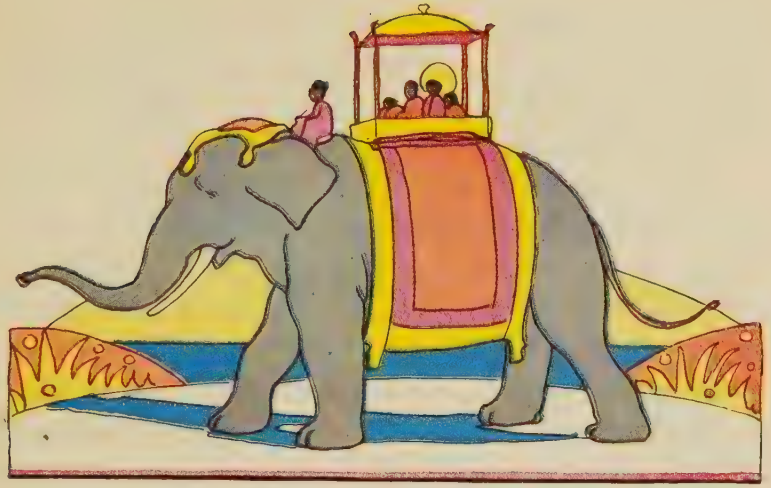
Kassim thinks he would like to wear a uniform—he is already a Boy Scout! But his mother says, "No, my son. Be a farmer like your father!"

His father says, "Be a better farmer than I am. Go to the English school in Kuala Kangsar, and learn more!" For up till now Kassim has been at a Malay school in the village.

So you see there are two voices in Kassim's life also, and he finds himself "betwixt and between."

In the end, however, he does as his father wishes. To-morrow he, too, will leave home, but he cannot go to college like Si Hamed. He will attend the Free School in Kuala Kangsar, and board cheaply in one of the hostels. At half-term he may cycle home, for now a good road skirts the edge of the jungle.

Kassim's mother does not approve of a bicycle. She is afraid her son may fall off it and be hurt. She is also afraid that a tiger from the jungle may spring out some day and attack him. But at this the farmer only laughs. "Not now," he says. "There are too many people on the roads."



II

A Fishing Picnic

As this is their son's last day at home, Si Hamed's father and mother have planned a picnic for him—a real Malayan fishing picnic, like those of the old days.

All the ladies and gentlemen of the district—both English and Malayan—are bidden to the picnic. Kassim and other boys have been sent round to invite them, and everybody is glad to go.

The guests are told in the letters of invitation to come on elephants, and to bring "rice and salt."

About sixty people, of whom half are ladies, come riding on elephants to the riverside. There

are two or three people on every elephant. The English ladies wear white frocks and shady hats. The Malayan ladies are dressed in gay silk robes, and carry big, coloured umbrellas.

At a given point the riders dismount. The elephants are hobbled—that is, tied by a rope round the leg to some great tree, and the fishing begins.

First, the men choose a deep rock pool in the river. Into this a charge of gunpowder and a slow match is thrown, and all retire to a safe distance.

Soon there is a loud report, the dead fish float up to the surface, and then the men plunge into the water and try to catch them with their hands.

Good swimmers will dive sixteen feet down into the pool in search of the larger fish.

Lower down the stream the ladies are grouped. Some stand with bare feet in the shallows, ready to catch the fish the men may let go. When one pool is empty, the party moves farther on.

Meanwhile, the village boys have lighted a fire on the bank. The rice is boiled, fish are roasted on split sticks, and when the fishers at last return, a meal is waiting for them.

How good it tastes! No plates have been brought. Each guest has a broad green leaf to hold his rice and fish and salt. Fingers are used instead of knives and forks.

While they are eating, Kassim and other boys

have been sent into the jungle to gather small wild fruit. These they put slily into the elephants' panniers, and when it is time to go home the ladies mount to their places. Gentlemen ride in front, and ladies behind.

At once the Malayan ladies put up their gay umbrellas. Why is this?

Ah, now is the moment for fun! The fruit is not ripe, it is hard and green. No sooner does the foremost elephant turn a corner of the path than the next elephant, as it comes round the bend, is met by a shower of fruit. This, we may be sure, is returned.

Then what peals of laughter echo through the forest as the playful battle goes on! The English ladies wish they had brought their sunshades, but the Malayan umbrellas are big enough for two.

As for the Englishmen, they score some good shots, for every Englishman loves sport, as does every Malayan.

Nowadays the Malayans are as keen on cricket and football as we are. This is one source of the good feeling which exists between the two races.

Si Hamed rides on the last elephant. His boy, Kassim, runs by his side. Night falls all at once, as it does in the jungle, and the laughter dies into silence.

MARIE BAYNE.

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE

I OFTEN wonder when I see
A map—no matter which it be—
If all those lines that cross each page,
Like bars around a song-bird's cage,
Are merely signs to help my eye
And show me where the countries lie,
Or are they really, *really* there,
And do folk ever travel where
They lie so black?
What fun if some gigantic tram
Set forth from Hull or Amsterdam
Along the track.
The tramcar man would say to me:
"This way, miss, for the Arctic Sea,
A penny, there and back."

HUGH CHESTERMAN.

THE TINDER-BOX

A "Fancy That!" Story

Lector.* There was once a soldier marching along the highway, carrying a knapsack on his back. Left, right! left, right! went his feet, and swing-swong went his sword hanging by his side. He was coming back from war, and was on his way home.

As he was going down the road he met an old and ugly witch.

Witch. Good evening, soldier. What a fine sword

* This part can be taken by several readers in turn.

you have, and what a big knapsack! I see you are a good soldier, and I will give you as much money as ever you could wish for.

Soldier. Well, thank you now, old witch!

Witch [*pointing to a tree not far from them*]. Do you see that big tree over there? Listen! It is hollow inside. You must climb right to the top of it, and then if you look down you will see a hole; through this hole you can let yourself down, and get right into the tree. I will tie a rope round your waist, so that I can pull you safely up when you call out to me and say you are ready.

Soldier [*in astonishment*]. But what shall I do down in the tree?

Witch. Fetch money! Right at the bottom of the tree you will find a big hall, lighted by three hundred lamps. In front of you you will see three doors, each with a key in the lock. Unlock the first and go into the room. You will find a large wooden chest in the middle of the floor, and a dog, with eyes as large as teacups, sitting on it. But never mind him, he won't hurt you!

Soldier. Won't he? But what shall I do if he barks—and bites?

Witch. Oh, I will give you my blue check apron. You must spread it on the floor, then quickly seize the dog and place him on my apron. He will be harmless then. Go to the chest and open it. You

will find it full of copper coins, and you can fill your pockets with them if you like. But perhaps you would rather have silver?

Soldier. Indeed I would.

Witch. Then go to the second room. There you will find a chest of silver coins, and a dog with eyes as large as mill-wheels. But don't be afraid—just put him on my apron and take as much silver as you like.

Soldier [*curiously*]. What is in the third room?

Witch. A chest of *gold* coins with a dog sitting on top of it, whose eyes look as big as a church steeple! He is a very wicked dog, but he won't hurt you if you just pick him up and put him on my apron. Then you can take as much gold as you like.

Soldier. This all sounds very good! But what do you expect me to do for you in return? Surely you are not going to let me have all this for nothing?

Witch. I don't want a single shilling! I only want you to bring up for me an old tinder-box. You will find it down there. My grandmother left it there by mistake when she went down the tree for the last time.

Soldier. I'll bring it for you. Tie the rope round my waist.

Witch [*knotting the rope round his waist*]. Here it is. And here is my blue check apron for you too.

LECTOR. The soldier ran to the tree and climbed it. He swung himself down into the hole, and arrived at the great hall lighted by three hundred lamps.

He opened the first door and looked in.

Soldier. My goodness ! Look at that dog now ! His eyes are as big as teacups !

LECTOR. Sure enough they were ! The dog sat on a big chest and stared and stared.

Soldier. You're a fine fellow !

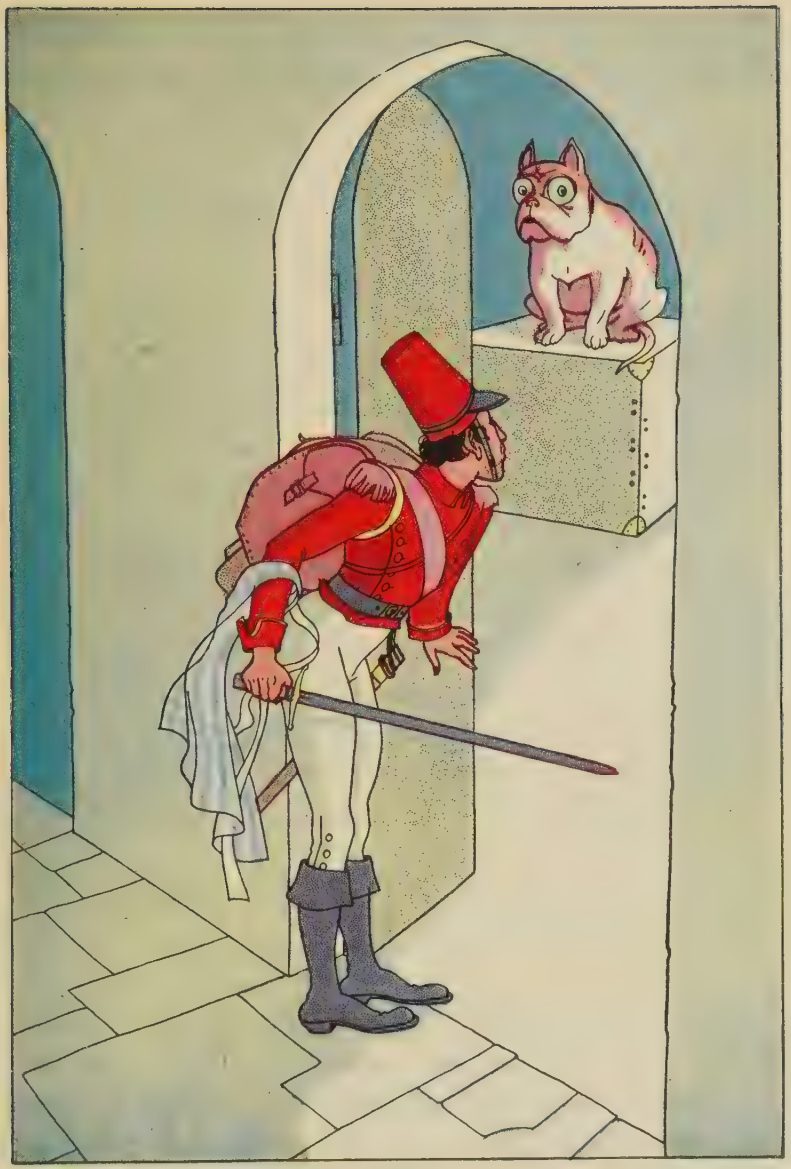
LECTOR. He placed him on the witch's blue apron, where he sat staring, as still as a statue. The soldier filled his pockets with copper coins from the chest ; then locked it, put the dog back, and went to the second room. And there was the dog with eyes as big as mill-wheels !

Soldier. Don't stare at me so ! You'll strain your eyes if you do !

LECTOR. He put the dog on the witch's apron, threw away all the copper coins, and filled his pockets with silver instead. Then he went into the third room. The dog there was dreadful to look at ! His eyes seemed as large as church steeples, and they rolled round and round in his head like cart-wheels.

Soldier. Good-evening to you.

LECTOR. He touched his cap to the staring dog, for he had never seen one like it. Then he lifted him down on to the apron and opened the chest.



Soldier [*in great wonder*]. Gracious goodness! What a lot of gold! Enough to buy a whole town and all the sweets and dolls and soldiers and rocking-horses in the world.

LECTOR. The soldier threw away his silver, and filled his pockets and his knapsack with gold. He even filled his cap and his boots with gold too, so that he could hardly walk.

Soldier. Ha! Now I am a rich man!

LECTOR. He chuckled as he locked the door and went out. He called up through the tree.

Soldier. Pull me out, old witch!

Witch. Have you got the tinder-box?

Soldier. Bless my buttons! I'd forgotten all about it. I'll go and fetch it.

LECTOR. He went back and found it on the floor of the big hall. Then the old witch pulled him up, and soon he was again on the highway, his pockets, boots, knapsack, and cap all filled with yellow gold.

Soldier. What are you going to do with the tinder-box?

LECTOR. The witch put out her hand for the box.

Witch. That I shall not tell you; give it to me quickly.

Soldier [*putting the box behind his back*]. Tell me first!

LECTOR. The witch lost her temper, and stamped and screamed—

Witch. I'll turn you into a beetle, and all your comrades into frogs ! And I'll do even worse things when I've got that tinder-box ! Give it to me !

Soldier. Certainly not ! And before you turn me into a beetle, I shall kill you ! You're a wicked witch, and I've no doubt that you've done enough evil in the world to fill a dozen large books !

LECTOR He drew his sword, and, just as the witch was muttering magic words to change him into a beetle, he cut off her head, so that she lay dead on the ground. Then he tied up all his gold in her apron, put the tinder-box into his pocket, and went straight to the nearest town. He walked to the best inn and asked for the best rooms, and for his favourite drinks.

The servant who had to clean his boots thought they were rather shabby old things for such a rich gentleman, for he had not had time to buy a new pair. But on the next day he went out and bought some beautiful boots and splendid clothes. He looked so fine that the people of the town were very pleased to talk to him about all the sights of their town, about the King, and about the beautiful Princess, his daughter.

Soldier. Where can she be seen ?

People. Oh, nobody can see her. She lives in a strong copper castle, with many towers, surrounded by very high walls. Nobody but the King himself

may pass in and out, for an old woman once told him his daughter would marry an ordinary soldier, and he is determined to prevent that.

Soldier [*to himself*]. I should very much like to see her.

LECTOR. But try as he would, he could not get permission to do so.

He lived a merry life, went to the theatre, drove in the Royal Gardens, and gave away money to the poor—for he remembered very well how hard he had found it to live when he owned but a few pennies. He was now rich, had fine clothes, and soon found many friends, who told him he was a splendid fellow and a true gentleman. All this pleased the soldier very much.

But one day he found that his money had come to an end! He was forced to give up his lovely rooms, and he went to live in a little garret at the top of an old house. He had to black his own boots and mend his own clothes, and he was very, very sad because none of his friends would come to see him. They said there were too many stairs to climb, and left him to himself.

There came one dark evening when the soldier had not even enough money to buy himself a candle. Then he suddenly remembered the old tinder-box that he had fetched from the tree. He knew there was a little piece of candle inside, and he took the

box out of his trunk to see. He found the piece of candle, and he was just going to strike a light when blip ! the door of the room flew open, and in came the dog with the eyes as large as teacups ! He came up to the soldier.

Dog. What are your lordship's commands ?

Soldier [*in great surprise*]. Bless my buttons ! What a splendid tinder-box to bring me a servant like this ! Go and get me some money, my good dog !

LECTOR. Off went the dog like lightning. He

was back almost before the soldier knew he was gone, and in his mouth he carried a large bag full of copper coins.

Soldier [*to himself*]. I wonder if I can get the dog that sat on the silver chest or the dog that sat on the gold chest!

LECTOR. He turned the tinder-box over and over in his hands. He soon found out the way—for when he struck the box once there came the teacup-eyed dog, twice brought the dog with eyes like mill-wheels, and three times brought the dog with eyes as big as church steeples!

They brought him so much money that the soldier left his garret, and took his fine rooms again. He dressed splendidly and soon all his friends came round him once more.

One day the soldier thought how much he would like to see the beautiful Princess.

Soldier. I wonder how I can manage it! I must think of a plan.

LECTOR. At that moment he thought of his tinder-box. He struck it, and immediately there came the dog with eyes as large as teacups.

Soldier. I want to see the Princess. I know it is the middle of the night, but still I should like to see her for a moment. Go and fetch her for me.

LECTOR. The dog ran off, and came back in a few minutes with the Princess lying fast asleep on his

back. She was so lovely that any one could see at a glance that she was a Princess. The soldier could not help kissing her.

Then the dog carried the Princess back again; but on the next morning, when she was at breakfast with the King and Queen, she told them she had had a very strange dream of a dog and a soldier in the night; she had been riding on the dog and the soldier had kissed her.

The King was upset, because he thought the dream sounded very queer, and he determined to tell one of the Court ladies to watch by the bed of the Princess to see whether it was really a dream, or, if not, what else it could be.

The next night the soldier felt a great longing to see the Princess again, so he called the dog and told him to fetch her to him. But the Court lady saw the dog and ran after him. When she saw the large house where the dog took the Princess, she took a piece of chalk and marked the door with a big white cross, so that she would know the house again. Then she went home, and soon the dog brought the Princess back again. When he saw the white cross on the door of the house where the soldier lived, he guessed what had happened, and he made white crosses on all the doors in the town, knowing that then the Court lady would not know which one she had marked!

Early next morning, when the lady had told the King everything, he and the Queen and his servants came to see where the Princess had been taken.

King [*looking at the first door with a white cross*]. There's the house !

Queen [*pointing to another door with a white cross*]. No ! *there* it is, my dear !

Everybody [*seeing white crosses on all the doors in the town*]. But *there* is one, and *there* is another, and another, and another !

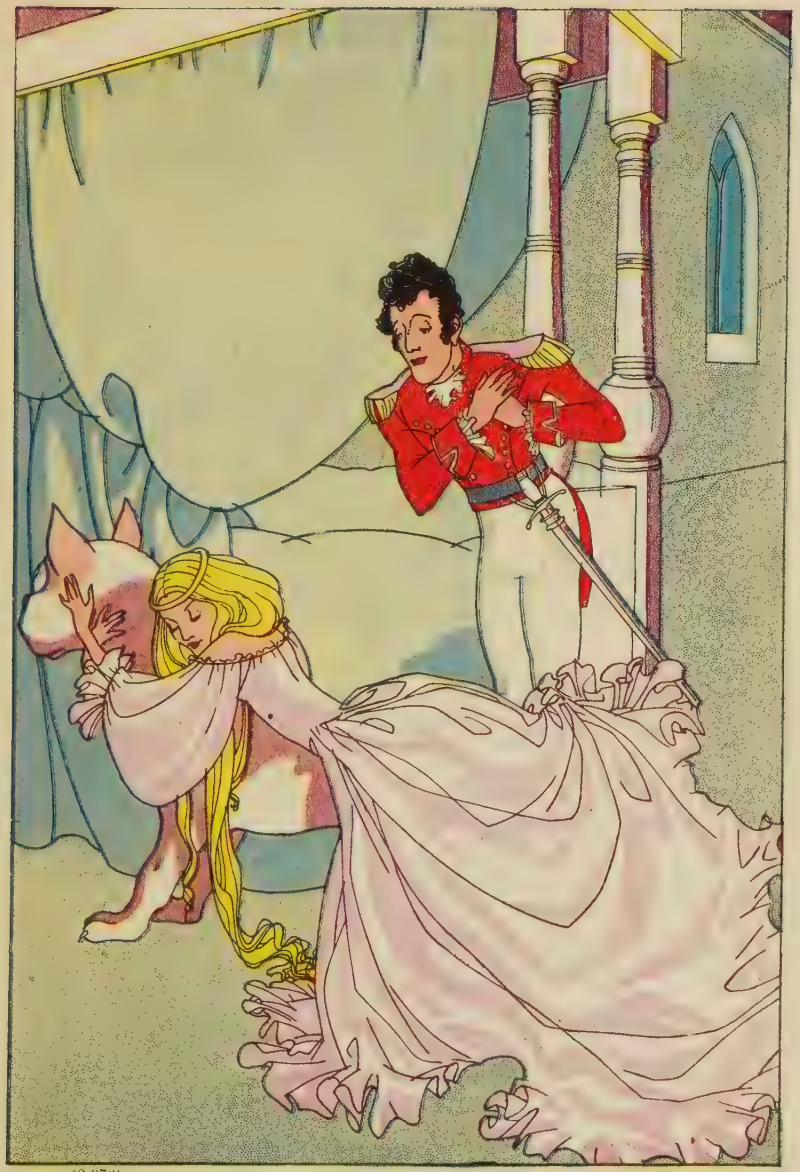
LECTOR. Then they knew it was useless to search any more, and they went back to the palace.

Then the Queen had a very good idea. She filled a little silk bag with rice and tied it on to the Princess's back. She cut a little hole in it so that the rice would run out all along the road if the Princess were taken away again.

That night the dog came once more, took the Princess on his back and ran with her to the soldier, who was now deeply in love with her and wished he could marry her.

The dog did not notice how the rice ran out of the bag all along the road from the castle to the soldier's house, but next morning the King followed the trail, and knew where his daughter had been taken to. The soldier was at once arrested and thrown into prison.

There he sat, and found it very dark and dull,



especially as his keeper told him that he would be hanged on the next day. But the worst thing of all was that he had left the tinder-box at his rooms!

The next morning, as he peeped through his bars, he saw a shoemaker's boy go running past, and he called out to him.

Soldier. Do you want four shillings? If you do, go to the place where I used to live and fetch me my tinder-box. Then I will give you the money.

LECTOR. Off ran the boy at once, very pleased, and soon brought back the tinder-box. Then the soldier felt more comfortable and began to smile again.

When the keeper fetched him out of his cell to be hanged, he was first taken before the King and Queen.

King [*sternly*]. Have you anything to say?

Soldier. Yes, your Majesty. It is the custom to grant a prisoner his last wish. Will you allow me to strike a light with my tinder-box, and light my pipe for a last smoke?

LECTOR. The King granted his wish. The soldier struck the tinder-box—one, two, three—lo and behold! there suddenly appeared the three dogs with their huge staring eyes.

Soldier. Ha! My dogs will tear you to pieces unless you let me go free and promise me the Princess for a wife! I will love her truly, and I am rich

enough to give her anything in the world that she wants !

LECTOR. The King looked at the great dogs and decided to do as the soldier wished. The Princess was fetched from the castle, and liked the look of the soldier so much that she fell in love with him at once.

They were married a week after, and three of the wedding guests had huge staring eyes—perhaps you can guess who they were !

Adapted from HANS ANDERSEN.

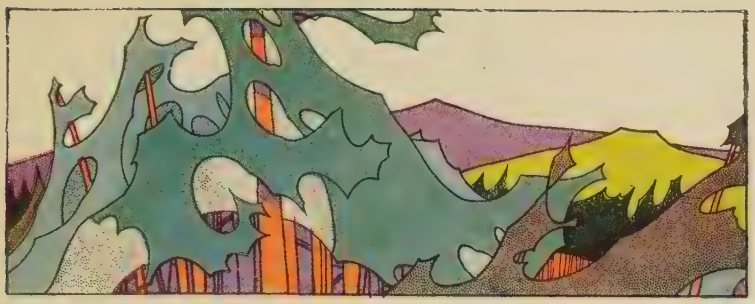
WRITING

ONCE, long ago, so I've been told,
When the world was only a few years old,
They didn't have any A B C
Like the one that was planned for you and me.
There weren't any pens to nibble and bite,
And nobody knew the way to write.
Nobody learned their capital G's,
Nobody learned to cross their t's,
And whether you dotted an i or not
Didn't really matter a jot,
Because there wasn't an i to dot.
Nobody's nib got bent or crossed,
Nobody's Copying Book got lost,
Ink-pots didn't get spilt and cracked,
And thumbs and fingers never got blacked.

They wrote things down in a prettier way,
For whatever it was they had to say
They said it in pictures crudely drawn—
A cat, or a crow, or a unicorn—

Scratched on stone with a rusty nail,
And every picture told a tale;
What should we think of ourselves to-day
If you and I were to write this way?
Just think of papa's surprise and sorrow
If he got a letter like this to-morrow!

HUGH CHESTERMAN.



WHEN THINGS COME ALIVE

A "Would You Believe It?" Story

Lector. There was once a bundle of Matches, and they scarcely knew what to do with themselves for very pride, for they considered themselves of remarkably high descent. The head of the family—that is, a mighty pine tree of which they were small splinters—had been formerly a large old tree in a northern forest. The Matches were now lying on a rather bare hearth in the kitchen, between a Tinder-box and an old Iron Pot, to whom they were telling the most remarkable events of their youth.

Matches [*in chorus*]. You may believe us, whilst we were still a green branch—we were, in fact, a green branch—every morning and evening we had diamond tea.

Lector [*quietly*]. That was the dew.

Matches. And the whole day we had sunshine, when the sun shone, and all the little birds had to sing to us or amuse us with interesting stories.

We could plainly see that we were rich, for the other trees had decent clothing only during the summer, whereas our whole family wore, even during the hardest winter, a beautiful green dress, which neither wind nor frost could take from us.

At last, however, in the midst of this pleasant life the woodcutters came—that was the dreadful revolution that cut up our family. The head of the family was appointed to the post of mainmast on a magnificent ship, which could sail round the world if it would. The branches were otherwise disposed of, and it is our tedious, though undoubtedly honourable, employment to give light to mere servants, on which account we are banished here into the kitchen, away from the society of the great.

Iron Pot. Well, it has been different with me. From the very beginning of my life I have been first put on the fire, and then scoured. The solids are my care, and I am, in fact, the first person in the house. My only pleasure is after dinner to stand neat and clean upon the shelf, and have some sensible conversation with my comrades. With the exception of the Pail, which sometimes gets out into the yard, we, however, lead a more secluded life here than in a prison. Our only news purveyor is the

Market Basket; but he talks too freely of the government and of the people. Why, it was only yesterday, I think, that an old jug fell off the shelf from sheer fright and broke into pieces.

Tinder-box [*interrupting her*]. You chatter too much.

LECTOR. Then the Flint and Steel came in such violent contact that sparks followed.

Flint and Steel [*together*]. Let us now have a merry evening of it!

Matches. Let us discuss which of us is of the noblest birth.

Dish. No, I do not like talking about myself. Let us rather have a general friendly conversation. I will make a beginning, and tell things such as every one has experienced, for then one can enter so thoroughly into the story, and it becomes really amusing. Well, on the coast of the German Ocean, under the shade of the Danish beech forests——

Plates [*in chorus*]. What a delightful beginning! That will certainly be a story after our own hearts!

Dish. Well, there I spent my youth in a quiet family. Each piece of furniture was dazzlingly bright, that one might see oneself in it. Every morning the floor of hard white wood, most tastefully laid down in a pattern, was scoured clean, and regularly every fortnight clean curtains were put up.

Broom [*interrupting*]. My gracious! how interest-

ingly you do tell the story! One can see at once it is a lady who is talking, for there is something so neat and tidy in it all.

Pail. Yes, indeed, one feels that without a doubt.

LECTOR. Here the Pail gave a little hop of such keen delight that the water went splash on the floor.

The Dish now went on with its story, and the end was in no way inferior to the promising beginning.

All the Plates rattled with delight, whilst the Broom fetched some dry flowers out of the dust-hole and crowned the Dish with a wreath, for she knew it would vex the others.

Broom [*to herself*]. If I crown her to-day, she will crown me to-morrow.

Tongs. Now I'll dance.

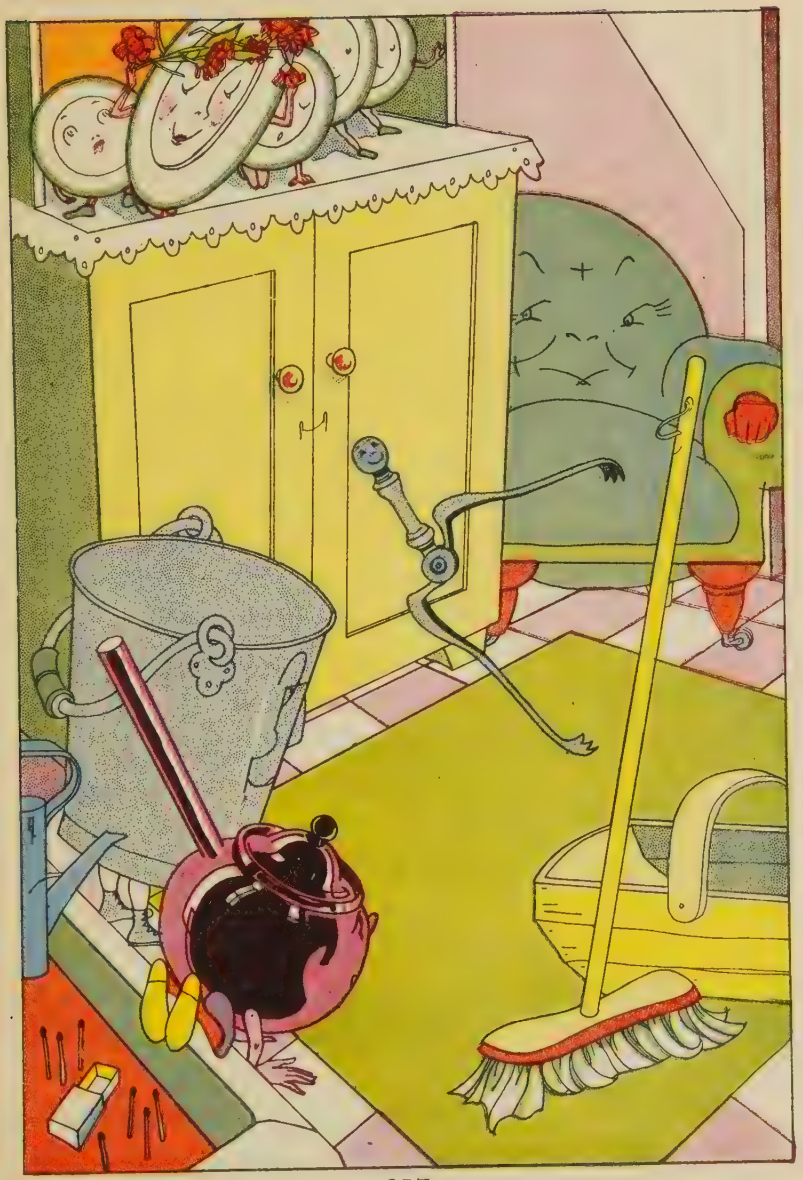
LECTOR. And she did dance. Oh dear, how she lifted up one leg in the air, nearly as high and much more gracefully than the most famous ballet dancer! The old Chair-cover in the corner split with staring at her.

Tongs. Am I not to be crowned too?

LECTOR. So *she* was crowned.

Matches [*to themselves*]. They are only low common people after all.

LECTOR. Now the Tea-urn was asked to sing, but she excused herself, saying she was cold and could only sing when very hot; which was true enough,



for she would always sing when she was standing on the drawing-room table.

In the left-hand corner of the window there lay an old Pen the cook was in the habit of writing with, about which there was nothing particularly remarkable excepting that it had gone down too deeply in the inkstand; but it was just this it was proud of.

Pen. If the Tea-urn won't sing, she is quite welcome to leave it alone. Outside, in a cage, there is a Nightingale who is a little musical too. It is true that she hasn't a note of school-learning, but this evening we will be particularly lenient.

Tea-kettle. Well, I think it highly improper that a stranger should be heard while I am here.

LECTOR [*aside*]. The Tea-kettle was the kitchen singer, and half-brother to the Urn.

Tea-kettle [*continuing*]. Is that patriotic? I appeal to the Market Basket, who is a man of experience; let him decide.

Market Basket [*in a grumbling tone*]. What a rage it puts me in to hear all this nonsense. Would it not be more sensible to turn the house topsy-turvy, and then, perhaps, some of us would get into our proper places? That would be another sort of fun.

All [*in chorus*]. Yes, let us have a regular row.

LECTOR. But at that very moment the door

opened and the servant came in, when all were immediately as quiet as mice. Not a syllable was uttered, but there was not one of them, the smallest or the meanest, that did not feel what he or she could do. "Yes, if I had wished," they thought, "it would certainly have been a merry night."

The servant lighted the Matches. Oh, how they fizzed, and with what a blue flame they burned!

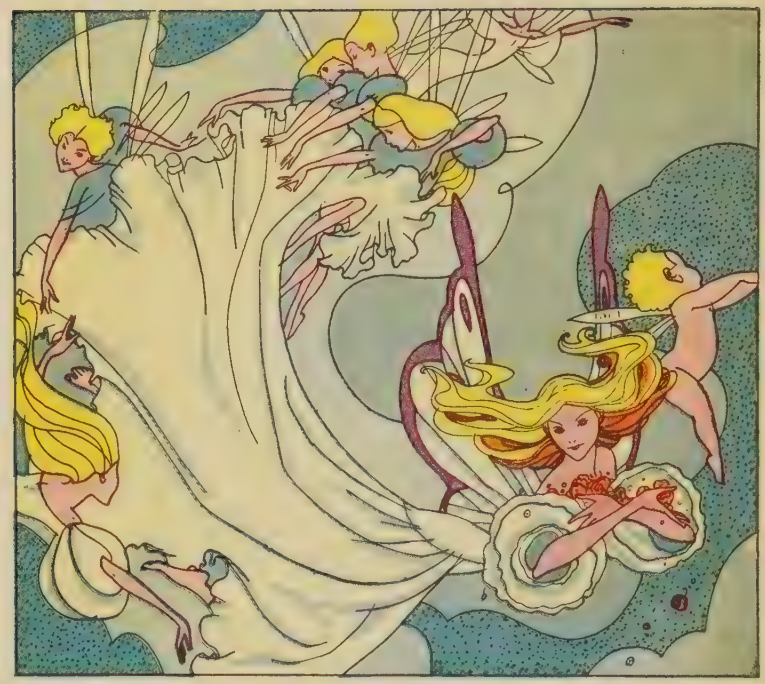
Matches [*to themselves*]. Now every blockhead amongst them can see that we are the first. What splendour! What a light!

LECTOR. And then all was over, for they were burned out.

HANS ANDERSEN.
From "The Flying Trunk."

THE COMING OF THE FAIRY QUEEN

SHE comes from the Western Garden,
The Isle of the Evening Star
That drifts in light through the seas of night
Like a rose-flushed nenuphar.
The garden that's dragon-guarded
To-day as in days of old;
The stars in her pathway fall and shoot,
The Hesper Tree is dropping its fruit,
Dropping its burden of gold.



What gift from the Queen of the Fairies?
What boon for this earth of ours?
What treasure-hoard in that Garden stored,
What fragrance of mystic flowers?
The glint of an Apple that's Golden,
The scent of a Rose that's Blue,
And the spray from the Fountain of Youth that clings
In May's first dew to her whispering wings,
These are the gifts that our Lady brings
From the Land where dreams come true.

W. Graham Robertson.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

I

AND, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted Jesus, saying :

" Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life ? "

He said unto him, " What is written in the law ? How readest thou ? "

And he answering said, " Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind ; and thy neighbour as thyself."

And Jesus said unto him, " Thou hast answered right : this do, and thou shalt live."

But the lawyer, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, " *And who is my neighbour ?* "

And Jesus answering said :

II

" A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

" And by chance there came down a certain

priest that way: and when he saw him he passed by on the other side.

"And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him.

"And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, 'Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.'

"Which now, of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?"

And the lawyer said, "He that showed mercy on him."

Then said Jesus unto him, "Go, and do thou likewise."

New Testament: St. Luke.

ABOU BEN ADHEM

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase !)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold.
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,

And to the presence in the room he said :
" What writest thou ? "—The vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered : " The names of those who love the Lord."
" And is mine one ? " said Abou. " Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still, and said : " I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."
The angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had bless'd,
And lo ! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest !

LEIGH HUNT.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN AT
THE PRESS OF THE PUBLISHERS

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